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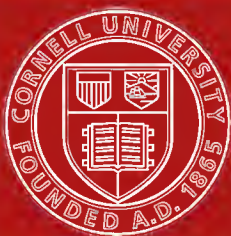
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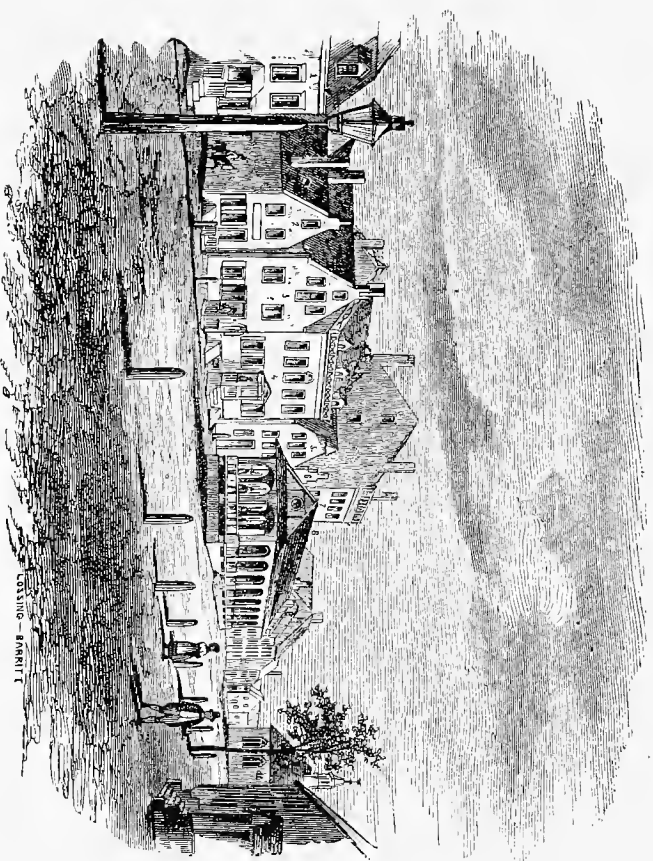
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View of East Side of Market Street in 1805, from Maiden Lane south.  
From Harper's Magazine.



RANDOM  
RECOLLECTIONS OF ALBANY,

FROM 1800 TO 1808:

BY GORHAM A. WORTH.

THIRD EDITION,

WITH  
*J. Munsell*  
NOTES BY THE PUBLISHER.



ALBANY, N. Y.:  
J. MUNSELL, 78 STATE STREET.  
1866.



## PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

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While the *Annals of Albany* were in the course of publication, I learned that Mr. Gorham A. Worth, president of the City Bank of New York, had written some reminiscences of Albany; whereupon I wrote to solicit the contribution of them to my work. He replied that they were unsuited to my purpose, but he would soon call upon me with a view to their separate publication. Happening to be absent when he called, the work fell into other hands. The first edition in 1849 was comprised in a thin pamphlet, but was soon followed by an enlarged work, embracing *Recollections of Hudson*. Both were published by Mr. C. Van Benthuyzen, in an attractive style of typography. The last edition appeared in 1850, and has long been out of print. The author died in 1856, aged 73. I have been unable to obtain any information concerning his personal history from his descendants, but learn that his father went from Nantucket to the district in Dutchess county then known as the Nine Partners, and afterwards taught school in Hudson. Mr. Worth says of himself: "Though born on Quaker hill, I have still been in the habit of considering Hudson as my native town, for the reason that my earliest recollections date from that place." He was fifteen years of age when he removed with his father's family to Hudson, and was about twenty when he came to Albany, soon after which he was appointed teller of the New York State Bank, then a new institution. When the Mechanics and Farmers' Bank went into operation, in 1811, he was appointed its first cashier, and brought with him his kinsman, Mr. Thomas W. Olcott, who has continued in the institution ever since, and

not only long since attained to its highest office, but has made for himself a reputation of the highest order as a financier. In 1817 Mr. Worth went to Cincinnati to take charge of a branch of the United States Bank. It is supposed that he remained there about five years, as in 1851 he published a similar work to this, which he entitled *Recollections of Cincinnati from a Residence of Five Years, 1817 to 1821*. He then removed to New York, where he acquired wealth, and maintained a high position in society. In this preliminary note it is not in point to speak of the work critically. An octogenarian of the city, Mr. John Q. Wilson, animadverted upon some portions of it in the newspapers of the day; his observations will be found in notes, with his initials attached. The sketch of Matthew Gregory was written by the late Dr. Willard. The remaining notes have been prepared by the publisher, with a view more particularly to illustrate the personal history of the characters mentioned by the author, and to note the time of their respective deaths. It is an interesting though melancholy fact, that of all the persons mentioned by him, the venerable Dr. Nott alone survives at the time of issuing this edition.

## NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

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*To the Publisher :*

Agreeably to your request, though not without some misgivings, I send you, herewith, a few additional pages of *Random Recollections*. It would be easy to fill a volume with such scraps as these; but to do justice to the subject would require more time than I can now conveniently spare. The ground is to be carefully surveyed, prior to any act of occupation. There are many choice anecdotes that cannot yet be told; many amusing scenes that cannot, with propriety, be described; and a long list of original characters, that it would, even at this distant date, be premature to sketch. Still, there are materials enough within the rule of right, to satisfy all reasonable curiosity; some little time, however, is indispensable to their collection and judicious arrangement for exhibition. But the novelty of the thing, I apprehend, has, in some measure, worn off, and unless the future recollections should be of a better quality than those I now send you, it would be as useless to *continue* the work, as it would be to republish the original copy without additions.

To the handsome style in which the thing was printed; to the liberality and laudatory tone of your city press, and to the good nature of the citizens of Albany, I attribute the favorable reception and ready sale of the first edition. But, it should be remembered, that nothing is new but once, that liberality and good nature may be over-taxed; and that the recollections, being local in their character and limited in their range, can excite little or no interest beyond the confines of your city. But the risk and expense of publication are yours, and if you really think it worth while to try the town with another edition, the few scraps I send you may, perhaps, authorize the printer's devil to insert in the title page, the catching phrase, *with additions*; and to strengthen this important announcement, I place at your disposal an entire new batch (written some two years since), entitled *Recollections of Hudson*. These, you may publish separately, or together with their Albany relatives (or not at all), as you may think best. I have no wish other than that you should not lose money by the idle sketchings of my pen.

Your friend and ob't serv't,

IGNATIUS JONES.

JONESBURGH, *January*, 1850.



## RECOLLECTIONS OF ALBANY.

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The election of Mr. Jefferson to the presidency, produced a new era in the political history of men and things throughout the United States. So great was the change, and so sudden the turn of the executive wheel, that the event was felt through all the ramifications of society, and the period became as memorable as that of the birth of the nation. Many, even at the present day, refer to it in their computations of time, as to one of those fixed periods, which are alike familiar to the learned and unlearned. It is, indeed, one of those chronological meridians, from which we calculate the degrees of time, advancing or receding as the case may be. Thus, instead of saying, "in the year 1801," or "at the beginning of the nineteenth century," we say, "at the period of Mr. Jefferson's election." Either phrase sufficiently designates the time referred to: the choice is, of course, optional, and the mode of expression a mere matter of taste.

In commencing these reminiscences, I prefer to say that my first visit to Albany was just before the election of Mr. Jefferson, or the *Great Apostle* as he is sometimes called. Not that the visit had any thing to do, either with the election of Mr. Jefferson or the fortunes of his followers, but because it was an epoch in my own personal history, as the election of Mr. Jefferson was, in the history of the country.

I had then just launched my "light untimbered bark" upon the ocean of life; with no guide but providence, and with no hand but my own to direct its course. Never shall I forget the deep feeling of loneliness that came over me when the receding headlands of my native bay disappeared in the distance, and I found myself, for the first time in my life, *alone on the waters*.

It was at the age of eighteen, and in the autumn of the year eighteen hundred, that I first set my foot within the precincts of the ancient and far-famed city of Albany. It is true, I had passed *through* the city some ten or twelve years before, but 'twas a rainy day, and in a covered wagon; and as the only glimpse I had of the town was obtained through a hole in the canvas I set it down as nothing, since, in reality, it amounted to nothing. I am, however, well aware that an intelligent,



sharp-sighted English traveler, such for instance, as Fearon, Hall, or Marryat, would have seen, even through a smaller aperture, and under less favorable circumstances, enough to have enabled him to have given you, not only the exact topography of the town and its localities, but a full and accurate account of its different religious denominations, the state of its society, the number of its slaves, and the character of its inns; together with many sage reflections upon the demoralizing tendency of republican governments!

But this faculty of taking in all things at a single glance: this ability to see more than is to be seen, is one of the many advantages which the English traveler possesses over all others, and which in fact distinguishes him from the traveler of every other country on the face of the globe — *the land of Munchausen*<sup>1</sup> not excepted! I mention these things

<sup>1</sup>HIERONYMUS KARL FRIEDRICK VON MUNCHHAUSEN (pronounced *Mink-housen*, instead of *Mun-charosen*) was a veritable German baron, and a cavalry officer in the service of Russia, who in his old age delighted in repeating the most wonderful stories of his adventures in the campaign against the Turks in 1737-39, which grew in absurdity by repetition, till he acquired the reputation of the greatest of living liars. A German refugee in England first gave them publicity in 1785, since which they have appeared in different languages, and attained great popularity. The baron died at Hanover in 1797, aged 77. It has been said that he was in Burgoyne's army, but it is quite a mistake, the chaplain Munchhoff in Specht's regiment being probably the person mistaken for him. See *Munsell's Historical Series*, vii, 163.

merely to satisfy the reader that I *might* have made something out of the affair of the *covered wagon*, had I been so disposed. But 'tis not my intention, nor was it when I commenced these reminiscences, to draw upon my imagination for a single fact. I have materials in abundance, and cannot, therefore, be tempted to go out of my way to *recollect incidents which never happened*, or to describe things which I never saw.

The city of Albany, in 1800, though the capital of the state, and occupying a commanding position, was, nevertheless, in point of size, commercial importance, and architectural dignity, but a third or fourth rate town. It was not, in some respects, what it *might* have been; but it was, in all respects, unlike what it now is. Its population could not, I think, have exceeded some seven or eight thousand.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In 1688 Albany was supposed by the French to have had 300 inhabitants capable of bearing arms. The population in 1698 was 379 men, 229 women, and 803 children. The tables of population sometimes differ a little, the Colonie being frequently counted in as well as the slaves, who were numerous at the close of the last and the early part of the present century.

1790, 3,498.	1835, 28,109.
1800, 5,387.	1840, 33,721.
1810, 9,354.	1845, 42,139.
1815, 10,023.	1850, 50,763.
1820, 12,630.	1855, 57,333.
1825, 15,971.	1860, 621,367.
1830, 24,209.	1865, 70,000 (estimated).

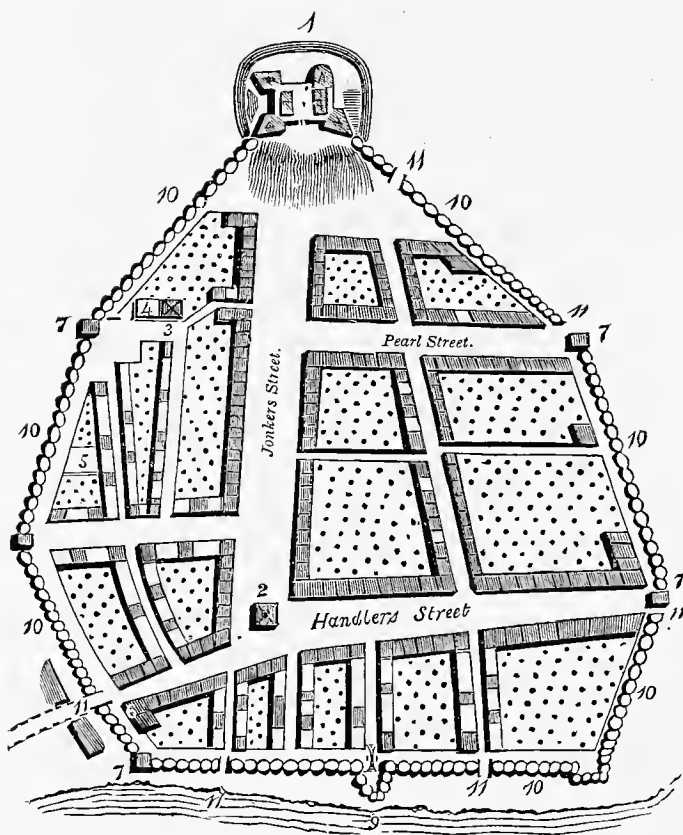
There is now a population of 200,000 within the bounds of a mile along both margins of the river from Cohoes to the Nor-

I know not what the *statistics* may say, nor is it material, for no man of sense puts the least faith in documents compiled by politicians, or published by authority. Most of Uncle Sam's figurers, particularly those that belong to the treasury department, figure frequently in the dark, and always at random. With them, the addition or omission of a cypher or two is, it would seem, of but little consequence. Hence their statistics, whether elaborated by the imposing genius of a Woodbury or a Walker, go for nothing with me. But to the subject.

Albany has probably undergone a greater change, not only in its physical aspect, but in the habits and character of its population, than any other city in the United States. It was, even in 1800, an old town (with one exception, I believe, the oldest in the country<sup>1</sup>), but the face of nature in and around it had been but little disturbed. Old as it was, it still retained its primitive aspect, and still stood in

man's kil, a distance of ten miles, being the largest aggregation in the state in the same compass, out of the cities of New York and Brooklyn.

<sup>1</sup>Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in the United States, was founded in 1607 by 105 colonists. It has gone to utter decay, containing at present two or three old houses, a dilapidated church, and the ruins of a fort. Albany, it has been claimed, became a trading post in 1610. Although a rude fort was built in 1612, it was nearly twenty years later before any considerable accessions were made towards a settlement by the introduction of families and domestic animals.



### ALBANY IN 1696.

Surrounded by a wall of wooden posts ten feet high,

- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. The Fort.                  | 7. Blockhouses.                  |
| 2. Dutch Calvinistic Church.  | 8. Stadt House.                  |
| 3. German Lutheran Church.    | 9. A great gun to clear a gully. |
| 4. Lutheran burial place.     | 10. Stockades.                   |
| 5. Dutch Church burial place. | 11. City gates, six in number.   |

all its original simplicity; maintaining its quaint and quiescent character, unchanged, unmodified, unimproved: still pertinaciously adhering, in all its walks, to the old track, and the old form. The rude hand of innovation, however, was then just beginning to be felt; and slight as was the touch, it was felt as an injury, or resented as an insult.

Nothing could be more unique or picturesque to the eye, than Albany in its primitive days. Even at the period above mentioned, it struck me as peculiarly naive and beautiful. All was antique, clean, and quiet. There was no noise, no hurry, no confusion. There was no putting up, nor pulling down; no ill-looking excavations, no leveling of hills, no filling up of valleys: in short, none of those villainous improvements, which disfigure the face of nature, and exhibit the restless spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race. The stunted pines still covered the hills to the very edge of the city, and the ravines and valleys were clothed with evergreens, intermixed with briars, and spangled with the wild rose.

The margin of the river,<sup>1</sup> with the exception of an

<sup>1</sup> [It is said that there were docks at this time from Maiden lane to the Watering place, as it was called, now the Steamboat landing. At the latter place was Hodge's dock, and above it the State dock, built in the French war.] At the foot of Maiden lane was Fish slip, where the sturgeon were sold. On Quay street were stores and dwelling houses, and a tavern. If our author, when he first set his foot in this "jewel of antiquity," had taken a walk

opening at the foot of State street, extending down to the ferry, was overhung with willows, and shaded by the wide spreading elm. The little islands below the town were feathered with foliage down to the very water's edge, and bordered with stately trees, whose forms were mirrored in the stream below. As far as the eye could extend up and down the river, all remained comparatively wild and beautiful, while the city itself was a curiosity; nay, a perfect jewel of antiquity, particularly to the eye of one who had been accustomed to the "white house, green door, and brass knocker,"<sup>1</sup> of the towns and

to this world-renowned sturgeon slip, "a little after sun rise," he would have witnessed a scene that would have cast the willows and elm trees into the deep shade of a forgotten past. There was the quiet ancient burger, elbowed aside by his Old and New England, Scotch and Irish brethren, more clamorous and eager for Albany beef than himself. If he had not beforehand entered into a confederacy with the Etsbergers and Reckhows, lords of the slip, he must infallibly have gone home dinnerless and desponding.

J. Q. W.

<sup>1</sup>If the seer had looked a second time, he would have seen the simple side hill street, the grass covering the east half of it. He would have seen the quiet citizens returning from their business or their morning walk — but he would not have seen a single cocked hat, nor red ringed worsted cap, upon the head of one of them, except may be that of the venerable Dr. Stringer on his professional morning tour. He would have seen the upper half of each front door open, and here and there a neat and thrifty house-wife, bending forward over the closed lower half, watching for her husband or her sons, as they came home to breakfast. He might have seen that brass knocker, in the form of a dog, on the door of Lafayette's head quarters, unlike any "knocker" on any "green door" in New England.

J. Q. W.



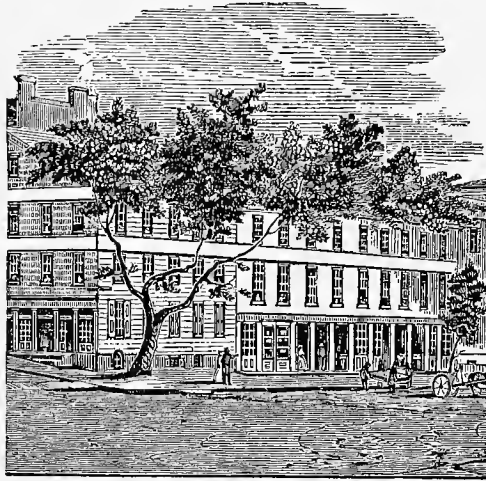


NORTH DUTCH CHURCH.

Erected 1798.



villages of New England. Nothing, indeed, could be more picturesque than the view of North Pearl street, from the old elm at Webster's corner, up to



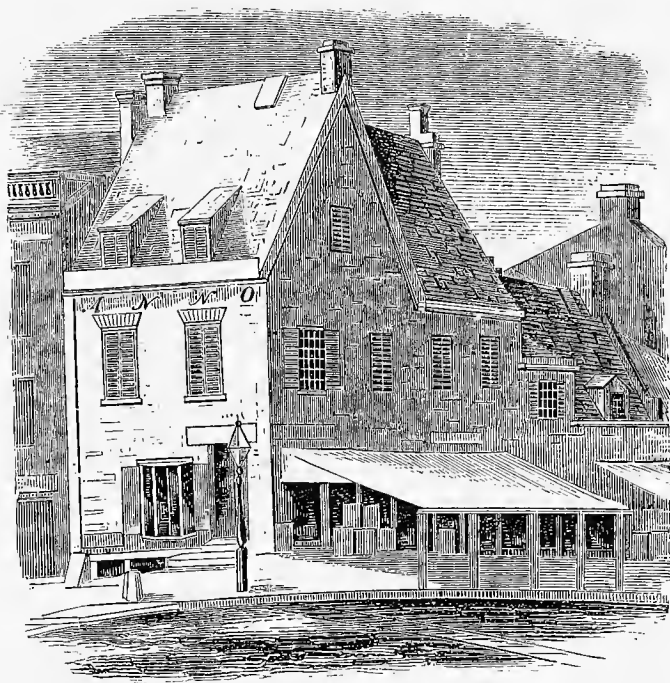
Webster's Corner and the Old Elm Tree.

the new Two- steepled Church. Pearl street, it must be remembered, was, in those days, the west end for the town ; for there the town ended, and there resided some of the most aristocratic of the ancient burghers. There, a little after sunrise, in a mild spring morning, might be seen, sitting by the side of their doors, the ancient and venerable mynheers with their little sharp cocked hats, or red-ringed worsted caps (as the case might be), drawn tight over their

heads. There they sat, like monuments of a former age, still lingering on the verge of time; or like mile-stones upon a turnpike road, *solus in solo!* or, in simple English, *unlike* any thing I had ever seen before. But there they sat, smoking their pipes in that dignified silence, and with that phlegmatic gravity, which would have done honor to Sir Wouter Van Twiller, or even to Puffendorf himself. The whole line of the street, on either side, was dotted by the little clouds of smoke, that, issuing from their pipes, and, curling round their noddles, rose slowly up the antique gables, and mingled with the morning air; giving beauty to the scene, and adding an air of life to the picture. But the great charm was in the novelty of the thing. I had seen a Dutch house before, but never till then had I seen a row of Dutchmen smoking in a Dutch city.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Shade of the immortal Diederick! and shall he not smoke? When one of these "ancient and venerable mynheers," who was coeval with those willows and elms, looked back to the many times when, in his canoe, he breasted the downward and devious current of the Mohawk, with its rifts, falls, and portages, descended into Oneida lake and followed its outlet to Oswego; coursed along the winding shores of Ontario and Erie to Detroit, up that river to St. Clair, and along the shores of Huron, crossing Saginaw bay to Mackinac, where he traded with the Indian for his furs, and of his returns thence to his family in Pearl street, laden with the riches so hardly earned, the labor of which has reduced him to early decrepitude, shall he be jeered at for his apathy? Shall he not smoke, and rejoice to see his quiet and contemplative neighbor, who has been in another way equally prosperous, do so likewise — without being ridiculed for his grave dullness?

Albany was indeed Dutch, in all its moods and tenses; thoroughly and inveterately Dutch. The buildings were Dutch—Dutch in style, in position,



#### THE STAATS HOUSE,

Erected 1667, and once formed a part of Lewis's Tavern, the adjoining house, originally Madam Schuyler's city residence, was removed many years ago, when that part of Pearl street was widened.

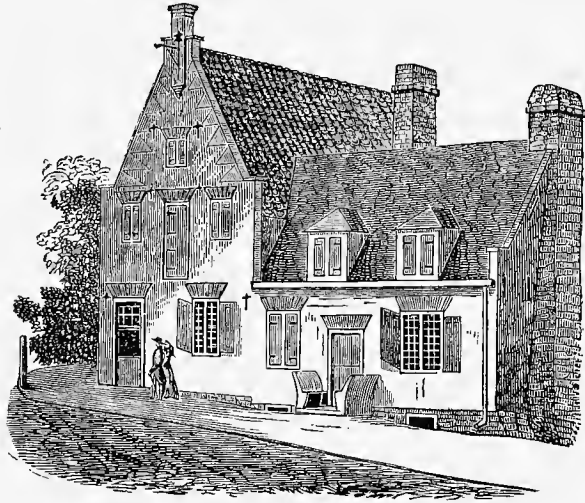
attitude and aspect. The people were Dutch, the horses were Dutch, and even the dogs were Dutch. If any confirmation were wanting, as to the origin

and character of the place, it might be found in the old Dutch church, which was itself always to be found in the middle of State street, looking as if it had been wheeled out of line by the giants of old, and there left; or had dropped down from the clouds in a dark night, and had stuck fast where it fell.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are very few of the present generation left who remember the position and appearance of this antique but venerable building, and fewer still who can realize the interesting recollections which from tradition cluster around it. The first church was built at a very early day, and of much smaller dimensions. It was placed in the position where it stood, at the intersection of what is now State street and Broadway, as a security against Indian attacks, commanding Broadway north and south, and State street east and west. The windows were high from the ground to guard against an escalade, as it was too far north to be protected by the guns of Fort Orange. It was a little fortress within itself. In those days all the men went armed to church. The young men were seated in the galleries, that they might be ready in case of an attack to sweep the street either way by their fire from the windows. The old men were seated on a raised platform along the walls, and the women were in the slips in the centre and out of the way of any danger.

Those, therefore, who have been unwise enough to ridicule the position of the church, have done so in their ignorance of the reasons for its location. The condition of these Dutchmen and the Pilgrims of New England were alike; both worshiped their Maker with arms in their hands. The tradition goes that when this old church was to be replaced by a new one, the same spot was selected for it, and the new church was built round the old one, and that during the time the new one was building, public service was regularly carried on in the old one, which was interrupted but two entire sabbaths. The new church was like the old one, and did not differ from it, except in size [and material, being built of stone]. The same high windows, the same arrangement of seats, and the same separation of the sexes. There was one

All the old buildings in the city — and they constituted a large majority — were but one story high, with sharp peaked roofs, surmounted by a *rooster*,



PEMBERTON'S CORNER.

Corner of North Pearl and Columbia streets, erected 1710.

striking difference, however. The congregation had become more numerous and wealthy, and each window bore the escutcheon of the several families who were disposed to pay for it, in colored glass. Each window had an outside shutter, which was fastened by a latch. The shutters were never opened, except on Sunday. Such was this church, with its steep roof, uniting in the centre, and surmounted with a belfry and a weathercock. Here in this church, and perhaps also in the old one, the dead of distinguished families were buried. Here preached "Our Westerlo," by which endearing appellation the old members of the flock used to designate their minister, which in the Dutch language, and from the lips of an aged matron, had an affectionate softness about it which the English translation cannot convey. Is it

vulgarly called a weathercock. Every house, having any pretensions to dignity, was placed with its gable end to the street, and was ornamented with huge iron numericals, announcing the date of its erection ; while from its eaves long wooden gutters,

strange that a church, from its commencement so ancient, and from its position so interesting, should be dear to the hearts of those whose fathers and grandsires had worshiped and been buried there ?

But this old church might, to the informed sons of the pilgrims, have called up a train of thought in which it would have been profitable for them to have indulged. Here, in this church, as late as the year 1800, the Dutchmen assembled on the sabbath, coming out of the mixed population which even then existed in the city. Here were to be found the descendants of the generous Hollanders, who in days long passed, had given shelter and protection both to the persecuted pilgrim and to the Huguenot — and for aught we know, knelt on the shore of Delfthaven, prayed with and bade God-speed to the company on the May-flower — or who had shielded the Huguenots of Rochelle from the hot pursuit of their red assassins. It was on a sabbath in July, of the year above mentioned, when the writer, for the first time, entered this church, fully aware of the kind of people he was to meet there. But the narrow aisles and slips ; the separation of the sexes ; the raised wall seats filled with old men, and the members of the corporation in their allotted seats ; the young men in the gallery ; the clerk's desk under the pulpit, and the old Holland-made pulpit itself, with its hour-glass and an iron moveable frame to support it ; the high windows with their bright stained glass coats of arms ; the stoves standing on platforms raised outside of the gallery and nearly on a level with its floor ; the figures in large German text hanging on each side wall, denoting the chapter of the Bible to be read, and the first psalm to be sung ; the reading of that chapter and decalogue by the clerk ; and giving out that psalm by the clerk, the singing, the salutation, and the *exordium remotum* by the minister — all so new and all combined, had less effect upon the writer than the people themselves — every drop of

or spouts,<sup>1</sup> projected in front some six or seven feet, so as to discharge the water from the roof, when it rained, directly over the centre of the sidewalks. This was probably contrived for the benefit of those who were compelled to be out in wet weather, as it furnished them with an extra shower-bath free of expense.

But the destined hour was drawing near. The

his pilgrim and Huguenot blood, and it was all he had, warmed to those whose forefathers had been kind to his — and he felt the full force of the injunction,

“Thy father’s friends forget thou not.”

He never has, and he never will.

Nearly all those in that church on that day, of full age, have departed from among us. The fires that warmed the ashes of some of them are hardly yet extinguished. Let no unhallowed heel tread upon them.

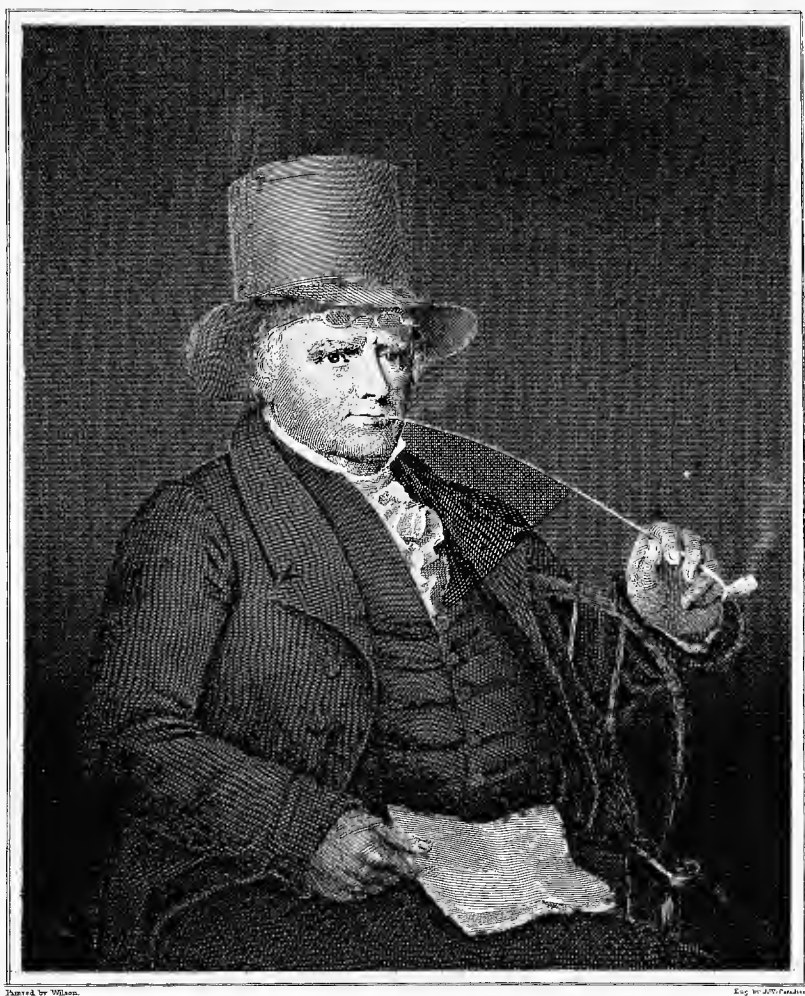
J. Q. W.

<sup>1</sup>These gutters are still common to some cities in Holland, and present a singular spectacle to a stranger in a rain storm. The law went into effect in May, 1793, that no gutter or spout should project into the street, but that the water should be conducted down the sides of the houses through pipes within three feet of the ground, under a penalty of forty shillings. These gutters were alluded to by Kalm, who visited Albany in 1749. He says: “The gutters on the roofs reach almost to the middle of the street. This preserves the walls of the houses from being damaged by the rain; but is extremely disagreeable in rainy weather for the people in the streets, there being hardly any means of avoiding the water from the gutters.” The same thing is alluded to by Morse, in 1789, who says: “There is one little appendage to their houses which the people, blind to the inconvenience of it, still continue, and that is the water gutters or spouts, which project from every house, rendering it almost dangerous to walk the streets in a rainy day. Their houses are seldom more than one story and a half high, and have but little convenience and less elegance.”

Yankees were creeping in. Every day added to their number; and the unhallowed hand of innovation was seen pointing its impertinent finger at the cherished habits and venerated customs of the ancient burgers. These meddling eastern Saxons at length obtained a majority in the city councils; and then came an order, *with a handsaw*, to "cut off those spouts." Nothing could exceed the consternation of the aforesaid burgers, upon the announcement of this order. Had it been a decree abolishing their mother tongue, it could hardly have excited greater astonishment, or greater indignation. "What!" said they, "are our own spouts, then, to be measured and graduated by a corporation standard! Are they to be cut off or fore-shortened, without our knowledge or consent!" But the Dutch still retained the obstinacy, if not the valor, of their ancestors. They rallied their forces and at the next election, the principal author of the obnoxious order (my old friend Elkanah Watson<sup>1</sup>), was elected *a constable* of the ward in which he

<sup>1</sup>In the year 1789, Mr. Watson removed from Providence to Albany. Among the curiosities in his common-place book I find a singular document which affords evidence that our country at that epoch was not wholly enfranchized from the influence of European usages, but that many of their restrictions and exactions still lingered. I refer to a certificate of the freedom of the city, which it seems each immigrant was required to possess, to be secured in the enjoyment and protection of his municipal rights.





ELKANAH WATSON.

*Physician of the New York Canals and Agricultural Society.*



lived! This done, they went to sleep again; and before they awoke, new swarms had arrived, and a complete and thorough revolution had taken place. The Yankees were in possession of the city! and the fate of the Dutch was sealed.

The following is a copy of the printed document : “ *Know all men by these presents* that I, John Lansing Jr., Esquire, Mayor of the city of Albany, have admitted and received, and do hereby admit and receive, ELKANAH WATSON to be a freeman of said city. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the said city to be hereunto annexed, the 28th day of May, 1790, &c.” And for this certificate, Mr. W. adds, I was compelled to pay five pounds. This abuse was early and vigorously assailed by him in the press, and was soon after abolished.

At the time of Mr. Watson's settlement in Albany, not more than five New England families were residents of the city. It was without any foreign commerce; the city was unimproved. State street, now one of the most spacious and beautiful avenues in America, was then not only without pavements and ungraded, but even broken and in some parts precipitous. The streets were without lamps. A singular deformity and inconvenience prevailed in some sections of the city. A custom had been introduced, which existed in the provincial towns of Holland, of discharging the waters from the roofs of smaller buildings by long spouts. In Holland the spouts were projected over the canals; but by the adoption of this practice in Albany the water was poured upon the head of the unwary passenger. The mind of Mr. Watson, familiar with the elegancies and advancement of European cities, at once saw and appreciated the various defective arrangements in the city of his adoption; and soon after becoming a resident, he engaged earnestly, through the press and by personal efforts, in suggesting and urging various local improvements connected with these subjects.

His exertions, in connection with the labors of others, generally secured their adoption; but as they necessarily entailed inconvenience and expense, the schemes excited strong hostility in the feelings of those who are opposed to all innovating projects. In subse-

The old families, however, still claimed the lead in all matters relating to good society. The city assemblies were still under their control, as well in regard to time and place, as in the power of admission and exclusion. In the exercise of this prerogative, a little jealousy of the Yankees was occasionally manifested. The difficulty was, *to know who was who*: to distinguish between those that were entitled to admission, and those that were not. Mere respectability was not, of itself, sufficient; nor was wealth to be considered as a *certain* passport. It was necessary that there should be something

quent years he received many generous tributes of acknowledgments and thanks from those who, in their progress, had opposed these efforts. His journal contains a notice of an amusing incident, which exhibits the state of feeling he had excited.

"Just after State street had been paved at a heavy expense, I sauntered into it immediately succeeding a heavy thunderstorm, and whilst regretting the disturbance in the sidewalk, and to observe the cellars filled with water (for in that section, which was near the present locality of the State Bank, the street in grading had been elevated some feet), I heard two women, in the act of clearing their invaded premises from the accumulation of mud and water, cry out — 'Here comes that infernal paving Yankee!' they approached me in a menacing attitude — broomsticks erect. Prudence dictated a retreat to avoid being broomsticked by the infuriated Amazons, although I did not run, as some of my friends insisted, but walked off at a quick pace."

Respecting the election of Mr. Watson to the office of constable, the joke was turned upon the electors, when the next morning the Dutchmen found him driving the hogs, found in the streets, to the public pound. The running at large of hogs was one of the city's most ancient usages, and they at once begged off, and made peace.

of rank, of family, or of fashion, to entitle a *new comer* to a seat among the notables. These matters, however, were, as a matter of course, left to the younger branches of the ancient aristocracy, to regulate as they saw fit.

Now it happened, that into this ancient and somewhat exclusive circle of good society, had slid many families, with their twigs and branches, who had in reality none of the rights and claims of the genuine Knickerbockers;<sup>1</sup> and who were, as far as *antiquity* was concerned, mere squatters; yet they were found to be greater sticklers for exclusion and probation, than the veritable mynheers themselves. Still, up to 1803 or 1804, things went on tolerably well: at all events, there was no complaint. The assemblies were sufficiently select as to quality, and perhaps sufficiently liberal in their range as to number. But, somewhere about the period referred

<sup>1</sup>It has become common to speak of the *élite* of the Dutch as the *Knickerbockers*. The name is derived from *K-nik-ker-bak-ker* (pronounced *connickerbauer*) a baker of knickers or playing marbles. The Knickerbackers were among the early citizens of Albany, and the progenitor of the race still bearing the name here, it is reasonable to suppose, like many others, took his patronymic from his profession; for there is a tradition that it was not the original family name. Washington Irving fancied it, however, and has immortalized it, but corrupted its orthography; so that we daily see many objects, magnificent or diminutive, from a steam boat to an urchins' hand-sleigh, bearing the title of Knickerbocker. Members of the family even, have descended to burlesque their names by substituting *o* for the vernacular *a*.

to, the self-constituted managers held a meeting, at which it was determined that the city assemblies should in future be "*more select*;" and that "*a line of distinction*," as they termed it, should be drawn. Accordingly a new list was made out, by which it was soon ascertained that several, heretofore admitted, had been left off, and many others excluded, that were thought to be better entitled to admission than many that were retained. The measure, therefore, was taken in high dudgeon by the friends of the excluded parties, and was considered as a piece of arrogance, even by those who had no personal cause of complaint.

A paper war was immediately commenced, and the character and pretension of the managers were ridiculed and satirized in a style as new as it was amusing. A series of poetical epistles, odes, satires, &c., &c., appeared in rapid succession; some of them displaying a good deal of taste and cleverness. One piece in particular, entitled *The Conspiracy of the Nobles*, written in mock heroic verse, contained some capital hits. It gave a highly poetic description of the first meeting of the managers, and an amusing sketch of their persons, pretensions, characters and debates. The most ridiculous speeches were of course put into their mouths, and they were thus made to exhibit themselves in a light that was

as laughable as it was absurd.<sup>1</sup> These squibs were answered by the conspirators, but without the wit or the humor that characterized the pieces of their opponents. The fire, however, was kept up on both sides for several weeks, to the great amusement of the town. The result was a mortifying defeat on the part of the exclusionists. The as-

<sup>1</sup>I quote from memory the following as a sample.

Next, up rose Milo, with a graceful mein,  
No comelier noble on the floor was seen,  
And all undaunted stood, with phiz serene.  
Thrice e'er he spoke, with easy grace he bow'd,  
Twice to the king, once only to the crowd:  
His hand sincere, he placed upon his breast.  
And thus his majesty and peers address'd:

"I wage no war, with either great or small;  
A neutral post I hold, or none at all;  
Of squibs, of jarring factions, plebeian bands  
And proud nobility, I wash my hands.  
My *interests only*, henceforth I'll pursue,  
To please *all men*, henceforth shall be my cue."

He ceased and sat, when with terrific frown,  
That darkened all the hall and half the town,  
Lord Roderick rose, and 'neath the awful shade,  
His proud imaginations thus display'd:

"Ye gods! and is it come to this, that *we*!  
The city's proud and prime nobility,  
Should waive our right of birth, our rank and place  
To gratify this new and upstart race!  
Let those who will, to base-born interests bend,  
I scorn the trading tribe, the truckling friend.  
Though round my head plebeian placards flit,  
With saucy satire fill'd, and damning wit;  
Though the whole town should join the vulgar throng,

semblies, as a matter of course, fell into the hands of the victorious party, and, to their credit be it said, were conducted with more taste and propriety, and were indeed more brilliantly attended than they had ever been before.

This was considered as a victory of wit over impudence, or rather of sense over nonsense. It is

And point the finger as I pass along,  
Still would I wear my wonted lordly face,  
And vindicate the honors of my race.  
Sooner than yield to their insurgent claims,  
I'd see the hills o'erthrown, the town in flames.  
Sooner than mingle in their turbid flood,  
And dance with doxies of plebeian blood,  
I'd see the assemblies to perdition hurl'd,  
And round them piled the fiddlers of the world!  
I'd see old Jove, on his imperial height,  
Blot out the stars and quench the solar light.  
I'd see the angry gods their vengeance pour,  
And hear, unmoved, eternal chaos roar!"

He ended — and applauding murmurs ran  
In echoing circles round the sage divan.  
When, rising from his seat with scornful look,  
Thus spoke VAN TRUMP, — and spoke it like a book.

"I view, my Lords, with deep disgust these jars,  
These petty jealousies and paper wars,  
And above all, this 'blotting out the stars!'  
This mighty nonsense! this uproar about  
The right of entrance at a dancing rout.  
For shame, my Lords! for once, be wise — be civil,  
And send your starch'd exclusives to the devil!  
Take my advice — throw wide your ball-room door,  
Add to your music six, and sand the floor!  
Take, *take the Yankees in*, and end this fuss,  
Or, be assured, my Lords, *they'll take in us!*" — AUTHOR'S NOTE.



but just, however, to add, that the real old Knickerbocker families took but very little interest in the contest, and were probably not much displeased at the discomfiture of their quondam allies. Let us now turn to revolutions of a graver import.

A restless, leveling, innovating spirit, now prevailed throughout the city. The detested word *improvement* was in every mouth, and resistance was unavailing. The stunted pines became alarmed, and gradually receded. The hills themselves gave way. New streets opened their extended lines, and the old ones grew wider. The roosters on the gableheads, that for more than a century had braved the *Indians and the breeze*; that had even flapped their wings and crowed in the face of Burgoyne himself, now gave it up, and came quietly down. The gables in despair soon followed, and more imposing fronts soon reared their corniced heads. The old Dutch Church<sup>1</sup> itself, though thought to

<sup>1</sup> This church was demolished in 1806, and the materials used in the construction of the Middle Dutch Church on Beaver and Hudson streets. It was erected in 1715. The Episcopalians began the erection of their church in State street 1714, which stimulated the Dutch to the vigorous prosecution of a similar enterprise. The walls were laid around the old church, and in September of that year the services in the old church were omitted in the afternoon of one Sunday on account of the obstructions to the entrance. In October the services were again interrupted two Sundays, while the old church was being demolished. On the third Sunday children were baptized in the new church in the afternoon. This was

be immortal, submitted to its fate, and fell ! not at the foot of Pompey's statue, exactly, but at the foot of State street, which freed from that obstruction, thenceforward became the Rialto of the city, where pedlers of stale sea-cod, and country hucksters, now do congregate.



DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH,

Erected 1715, demolished 1806.

thought to be so notable a feat that it is still an oft repeated tradition. Equally note-worthy is the fact that the first person baptized in the new church in 1715, was the last one for whom the bell tolled at her funeral in 1806, her age being 92.

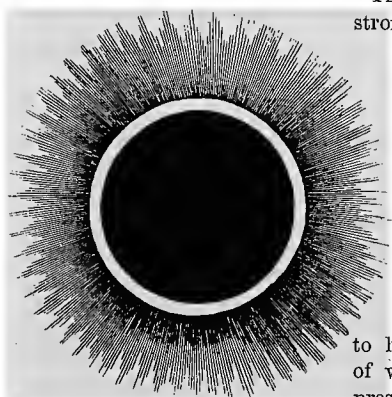
Even the dogs now began to bark in broken English: many of them, indeed, had already caught the Yankee twang, so rapid was the progress of refinement. In the process of a few brief years, all that was venerable in the eyes of the ancient burgers disappeared. Then came the great eclipse of 1806,<sup>1</sup> which clearly announced the fall and final end of the Dutch dynasty. It is hardly necessary

<sup>1</sup>This eclipse forms an epoch in our history. It was *captured* by Ezra Ames and Simeon De Witt. The former made a painting of it, and the latter described it. The accompanying engraving is but a very poor counterpart of Mr. Ames's painting. It was a total eclipse, and Mr. De Witt in describing the painting says:

"The edge of the Moon was strongly illuminated, and had

the brilliancy of polished silver. No common colors could express this; I therefore directed it to be attempted by a raised silver rim. No verbal description can give anything like a true idea of this sublime spectacle, with which man is so rarely gratified. In order

to have a proper conception of what is intended to be represented, you must transfer



your ideas to the heavens and imagine, at the departure of the last ray of the Sun, in his retreat behind the Moon, an awful gloom in an instant diffused over the face of nature, and around a dark circle near the south, an immense radiated glory, like a new creation, bursting on the sight and for some minutes fixing the gaze of man in silent amazement."

to say, that not an iron rooster has crowed upon the gable heads, nor a civil cocked hat been seen in the ancient city of Albany, from that day to this.<sup>1</sup>

But let it be remembered, that if the growth of Albany was slow, its position rendered it sure. The great west, in 1800, was comparatively a wilderness. With the growth of this vast interior, Albany has grown; it has increased with its increase, and strengthened with its strength. No hand, however strong, no enterprise, however active, could have carried it forward one hour faster than it went. Its trade was necessarily dependent upon the population and products of the west, and with these it has fairly kept pace.

It is, however, true that the ancient Dutch fami-

<sup>1</sup> The last of those who adhered to the burger costume was Gen. John H. Wendell, who lived in a small Dutch built house in North Market street, the sixth door above Maiden lane, on the west side. He died 10th July, 1832, aged 80, and lies buried in the Dutch Reformed church yard, on State street. He died of an apoplectic attack which occurred at church on the previous Sunday. In 1776, at 24 years of age, he abandoned the profession of the law, and became an ensign in the first New York regiment, but soon entitled himself to promotion, and was made captain under Col. Van Schaick, and commanded a company at the battle of Monmouth. He was with the army during the whole period of the war, and was subsequently raised to the rank of major-general of the militia, and also filled various civil offices with talent and ability. He continued to wear the costume of the era of the revolution to the time of his death.

lies, though among the most wealthy and respectable, were not the most enterprising, nor the most active. Many of them possessed large landed estates, lived upon their incomes, and left to others the toils and profits of trade. At the head of this class, and distinguished for his many excellent and amiable qualities, stood the late patroon, Stephen Van Rensselaer;<sup>1</sup> a man widely and honorably known; rich without pride, and liberal without ostentation. I may also mention the name of Jeremiah Van Rensselaer,<sup>2</sup> a whig of the revolution, and for several years lieutenant-governor of the state: a frank, stout-hearted old gentleman, universally respected.

General Ten Broeck,<sup>3</sup> also of the revolutionary

<sup>1</sup> Born 1764, died 1837; a memoir of him, written by Daniel D. Barnard, may be found in *Annals of Albany*, iii, 281.

<sup>2</sup> JEREMIAH VAN RENSSELAER died 19th Feb., 1810, aged 70. He took a conspicuous part in the Revolution; was chairman of the committee which drew up the famous objections to the adoption of the constitution in 1787 (see *Annals Albany*, iv, 336); was elected president of the Bank of Albany 1799; declined reelection in 1806. The house in which he lived was in North Pearl street, the third below Steuben, on the east side, and was taken down in 1837 for the erection of a splendid dwelling by Mr. Thomas W. Olcott which was described by the English traveler, Buckingham, who visited the city at the time.—*Annals of Albany*, ix, 291-2.

<sup>3</sup> ABRAHAM TEN BROECK died January 19, 1810, and his funeral was attended with military honors and a very large concourse of citizens. The Ten Broecks do not appear to have come early into the country (unless they went originally under the name of Wessels), although the name is mentioned in the *Knickerbocker* his-

school, distinguished for his activity, intelligence and public spirit.

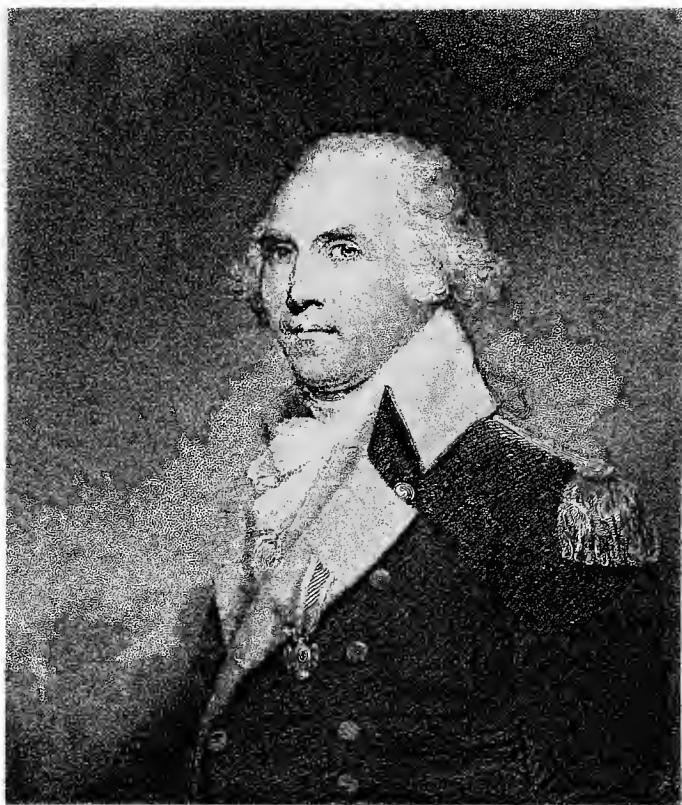
Cornelius Van Schelluyne,<sup>1</sup> the then best living type of the ancient race ; rich, honest, independent, unlettered and unpretending.

In alluding to these ancient and wealthy families, that of the Gansevoorts should not be omitted ; for it is connected with the patriotism and the triumphs

tory. Dirk Ten Broeck is the first mentioned in the city records, who was mayor of Albany in 1747, and died before 1751. His son Abraham, who is the person here alluded to, engaged in merchandize, and in 1753 married Elizabeth, sister of Stephen Van Rensselaer. From 1760 to 1765, he represented the manor in the general assembly, and took an active interest in the revolution. He was a delegate in the provincial congress, and as brigadier general of the militia, rendered efficient service, especially in 1777. In 1779 and 1796 he was mayor of the city, and from 1780 to 1783 was in the state senate ; and in 1781 was appointed first judge of Albany county, an office which he held thirteen years. He was also president of the Bank of Albany, and enjoyed in a large degree the confidence and esteem of the public. His house stood on the north line of Columbia street, facing North-market street. The house, when it was built, stood outside of the city stockadoes ; it was burnt in the great conflagration of 1798 (Aug. 4), which overran several streets, rendering houseless one hundred and fifty families—the greatest calamity that had ever befallen the city. He then built the house on Arbor hill, upon a plat 292 by 759 feet, the house 44 by 52 feet, now the residence of Mr. Thomas W. Olcott, corner of Ten Broeck and Third streets. It is believed that Gen. Ten Broeck has no posterity residing in Albany.

<sup>1</sup>CORNELIUS VAN SCHELLUYNE died 16th April, 1813, aged 76. There is now no representative of this once wealthy and influential family remaining in the city ; he was therefore the last of his race, so to speak. The progenitor of the family in this country was Dirk Van Schelluyne, who arrived in New Netherland in 1652.





Painted by G. Sparr.

A. A. 31. J. F. T. 1802.

*Peter Gannvoort*



of the revolution. "The hero of Fort Stanwix"<sup>1</sup> has left to his descendants a time-honored name—a name that belongs to the history of the country, and to one of its most interesting and important periods.

But those of a more active and business-like character among the Dutch, were the Bleeckers, the Lansings, the Douws, the Van Schaicks, the Ten Eycks, the Ten Broecks, the Pruyns, the Hochstrassers,<sup>2</sup> the Van Loons, and the Staatses. The principal merchants of the city, however—those who gave life and character to its business interests—were citizens of a more recent date, coming from differ-

<sup>1</sup>PETER GANSEVOORT, JUN., born 17th July, 1749, died 2d July, 1812, aged 62. With the rank of major he accompanied Montgomery to Canada in 1775. He commanded at Fort Stanwix as colonel when it was besieged by St. Leger, in 1777, and resolutely defended the post from the 2d to the 22d August, when the advance of Arnold dispersed the besieging army, and relieved the fort. For this gallant conduct he received the thanks of congress, and in 1781 was appointed brigadier-general by the state. After the war he acted as military agent, and was entrusted with other offices, in all which he maintained a high character for honesty of purpose and efficiency. For an extended biography of General Gansevoort, prepared by his son, the Hon. Peter Gansevoort, see Rogers's *Biographical Dictionary*; also, Appleton's *New American Cyclopedia*. General Gansevoort was born in the house which formerly stood on the site of Stanwix Hall, corner of Broadway and Maiden lane, the property having been long in the family. He died in the house which he built about 1801, on a part of what now constitutes the plat occupied by the Delavan House.

<sup>2</sup>The Hochstrassers disappeared some years ago, the last being Jacob, the son of Paul, who died 16th April, 1845.

ent parts of the Union, but mostly from New England. Among these, were James Kane, Dudley Walsh,<sup>1</sup> William James,<sup>2</sup> Isaiah Townsend,<sup>3</sup> Gilbert

<sup>1</sup>DUDLEY WALSH, some time president of the Bank of Albany, died 24th May, 1816, aged 55. He was distinguished, says his obituary notice in the *Albany Daily Advertiser*, for the temperance and regularity of his life. He was the builder of his own fortune and character; having come to this country from Ireland, and begun his career unaided and alone; and his industry, intelligence and integrity placed him at the head of the commercial interest. "As a Christian, a citizen, and a merchant, he had no superior here." His residence was on the south-east corner of North-market and Steuben streets, and his place of business was nearly opposite. The dwelling, although some years ago converted into stores, was standing until the present year, when it was so much altered and greatly enlarged for the use of the American express company, as to destroy its identity.

*born 1729*  
<sup>2</sup>WILLIAM JAMES, a native of Ireland, as we learn from his tomb stone, died 19th Dec., 1832, aged 63. From a humble beginning he became an eminent and opulent merchant, and long occupied the position of a liberal and enlightened citizen. Prosperous almost beyond parallel, his career exemplified how surely strong and practical intellect, with unremitted perseverance, will be accompanied by success. Of unaffected manners, generous, hospitable, public spirited, open ever to the claims of charity, prompt to participate in any enterprise of general utility or benevolence, Mr. James enjoyed, as he deserved, the sincere respect and esteem of his fellow-citizens, and his loss was rightly considered as a public calamity. His residence was on the east side of North-pearl street, below Steuben street, built by Daniel Hale; his place of business the building still occupying the west corner of State and Green streets.

<sup>3</sup>ISAIAH TOWNSEND died 17th Feb., 1838, aged 61. He was a native of Orange county, the eldest of nine children, and came to the city in 1799. As the senior partner of the house of I. & J. Townsend he had been engaged in active and extensive mercantile and manufacturing business for the last thirty-six years of his life.

Stewart,<sup>1</sup> Thomas Gould<sup>2</sup>, William,<sup>3</sup> John, and Alex-

The house, by its enterprise and liberality, had done much to promote the manufacturing interests of the country, and still more to advance the prosperity of the city. He is characterized as in all things an upright, just, and generous man, who lived a life of honor and usefulness. His residence was the house on the south-east corner of State and Eagle streets, now the executive mansion; his place of business the store No. 62 State street.

<sup>1</sup> GILBERT STEWART came from Orange county, and returned thither at the close of an unsuccessful business career. He carried on a general flour and grain business on the dock, and was also engaged in milling. He built the house No. 132 State street, at present owned and occupied by Dr. Peter McNaughton, but did not long enjoy it. It was some time the residence of William L. Marcy.

<sup>2</sup> THOMAS GOULD died 22d April, 1820, and was buried from his dwelling house No. 18 Montgomery street. In 1798 his business relations with Benjamin Dickinson and Job Gould, under the firm name of Gould, Dickinson & Co., were dissolved, his brother Job continuing the business at 13 Court street. He then carried on business on the opposite side of the street, between Beaver and State, and had for a time Henry W. and Edward C. Delavan as partners in the hardware business: and subsequently until his death his store was the one still occupied for the same business on the corner of State street and Middle lane now James street. He acquired a fortune. In 1832 his estate was apportioned \$10,000 damages for property required for the opening of Little-state street.

<sup>3</sup> URIAH MARVIN, John Marvin, William Marvin, Alexander Marvin and Richard Marvin were brothers, born in Lyme, Connecticut. About 1796 John Marvin removed to Ballston, and kept a store on Court-house hill. Some four years afterwards he removed to Albany and formed a partnership with his brother, William, under the name of Wm. & John Marvin. They carried on business as grocers in the store on the south-west corner of State and Quay streets, the stand afterwards occupied by Geo. W. Stanton. Alexander Marvin commenced business in Ballston about 1804, and came to Albany about two years afterwards and here went into the store of his brothers. Not far from 1810, they

ander Marvin, Thomas Mather,<sup>1</sup> Peter and John I. Boyd,<sup>2</sup> John Spencer & Co.,<sup>3</sup> John and Spencer Staf-

purchased a lot on the east side of Court street, since South-market, now South Broadway, at the south corner of Trotter's alley, and there carried on business under the name of W., J. & A. Marvin. John retired from the business in 1822 and it was then continued under the name of W. & A. Marvin until 1828 when William retired, and B. C. Raymond became a partner under the name of A. Marvin & Co. Mr. Alexander Marvin retired from business in 1842. William Marvin died at New London, Conn., 19th May, 1849, aged 74; John died at Albany, 8th May, 1853, and Alexander died at Albany, 1st Sept., 1864, in his 80th year. Uriah and Richard were in other business in Albany.

<sup>1</sup> THOMAS MATHER came from Lyme, Conn., and did a general store business in State street below James, early in the present century, and afterwards became interested in mills on the Wynants kil, and dealt in flour and grain on the dock, corner of Trotter's alley. He was one of the first directors of the New York State Bank, and seems to have left Albany before the war of 1812. He went to Middletown, Conn., where he carried on a business with the West Indies, shipping horses principally, and bringing back the products of that country. He died about 1850 at an advanced age.

<sup>2</sup> The father of Peter and John I. Boyd arrived in Albany from Scotland in 1774, and his ten sons were born and reared in this city. The firm commenced business in 1803, and became extensively known for its probity and honorable dealings. They did business in South-market street, and retired in 1830 with a competency. Peter was an active member of the First-presbyterian church, and diligently occupied in doing good. He reared a numerous family and died 3d July, 1846, aged 71. John I. died unmarried, 12th July, 1856, aged 76.

<sup>3</sup> JOHN SPENCER died 13th Aug., 1824, aged 44. The firm of John Spencer & Co. consisted of himself and Thomas Gould about 1808. The latter built for the use of the firm the store now occupied by Messrs. Tucker & Crawford, on what was then Court street, between State and Beaver, which was for many years the hardware row. Mr. Spencer subsequently associated Mr. Erastus Corning with him in the business, under the same firm name. In 1819, an association styled the Albany Chamber

ford,<sup>1</sup> Isaac and George Hutton,<sup>2</sup> the Messrs. Webb,<sup>3</sup> and many others.

Chamber of Commerce and Public Improvements was formed, the objects of which were not made public, but a committee of five was appointed for the month of April, to settle any disputes that might arise between merchants of the city, who might choose to submit them for settlement, which consisted of Isaiah Townsend, Joseph Alexander, Peter Van Loon, Walter Clarke and John Spencer. On the death of Mr. Spencer, his surviving partner, Mr. Erastus Corning, carried on the business alone for some years, and then associated himself with John T. Norton, under the firm name of Corning & Norton; and this house became the most extensive hardware establishment in the state out of the city of New York — Mr. Corning having retired only within the last two years.

<sup>1</sup> JOHN STAFFORD died 12th Oct., 1819, aged 57, and Spencer died 10th Feb., 1844, aged 72. The latter lived at No. 100 Lydius street, in the house now owned and occupied by the Rev. I. N. Wyckoff; his place of business was in the row on Court street, between State and Beaver. Mr. Lewis Benedict was one of the firm when it was dissolved, 5th March, 1817.

<sup>2</sup> ISAAC HUTTON died at Stuyvesant Landing, 8th Sept, 1855, aged 68, and George died at Rhinebeck. They were engaged in the manufacture and sale of silver ware and jewelry, in North-market street, where Henry Newman's store now is. Having acquired money they embarked in the manufacture of cotton goods and became bankrupt.

<sup>3</sup> The house of Webb & Dummer was established in the fall of 1807. They advertised a new wholesale store, No. 17 State street, opposite the post office, in the store formerly occupied by Sanders & Odgen. This was on the site of the Exchange building. In 1815 they were doing business where 51 State street now is, and in July of that year purchased the east half of the Tontine building, which was occupied by themselves and their successors till quite recently. George Dummer retired and the firm name was afterwards J. H. & H. L. Webb, which was dissolved in March, 1829. John H., the partner of Dummer, died at Hartford, Conn., 14th Sept., 1847. The firm afterwards consisted of

There was still another class, not less active, nor less important, in a business point of view. I allude to a then comparatively new, or recently established, H. L. & C. B. Webb and Alfred Douglass. The Webbs sold out to Gregory & Co., in 1844. It was the first house in this branch of business that extended a credit to the merchants of the Northwest territory, then almost a wilderness, often astonishing the burgers of Albany by a display of packages marked Fort Winnebago, Green Bay, Chicago, Sault Ste. Marie, Pontiac, &c., places having a very uncertain whereabouts in the far west, absolutely beyond the reach of civilization. Michigan, until the establishment of their branch in Detroit, in 1834, drew her supplies almost exclusively from them. Henry L. died at Hartford, Conn., in Oct., 1846. He was one of the founders of the Canal bank, and at the time of his death was president of the Gas Light company. George Dummer was born in New Haven, Ct., 8th February, 1782, and died in Jersey City, 21st February, 1853. After he retired from the firm, he resided in the city of New York until 1825, when he removed to Jersey City, where he had already in that year built two extensive factories; one for the manufacturing of flint glass and the other for making china ware. These were the first factories erected in Jersey City, and they have contributed much to its present prosperity. In the china factory an excellent article of porcelain was produced; but the cost of manufacturing this ware was too great to bring it in successful competition with the imported article sold in the American market. The establishment soon passed into other hands and is now known as the Jersey City Pottery. The glass house is one of the largest in the United States, and was carried on by Mr. Dummer from the beginning, with great energy, honesty and steadiness of purpose, through all the vicissitudes of mercantile revolutions and commercial difficulties, and under every change of the tariff. By his ability the works were kept in full operation, while other glass makers were at times obliged to curtail their operations or discontinue business entirely. A few years before his death he was attacked by paralysis, and having lost his activity, and being then an invalid, he retired from business in 1852. The Jersey City Glass Works are now leased to Read & Moulds, able practical

tablished body of mechanics, of which Benjamin Knower<sup>1</sup> was confessedly at the head. Mr. Knower

glass makers, and formerly operatives in the establishment. Like the vestal lamps the fire in the Jersey City Glass Works burned night and day and never was allowed to go out from the time it was first lighted under the pots in 1825, until in March, 1865, when the absolute scarcity of coal in the New York market, the consequently high prices, and the constant demand of the workmen for higher wages, which were already exorbitant, all caused by the disturbed state of the country, reluctantly compelled the present firm to suspend operations for a time. This cessation of glass making lasted four weeks, when to the joy of many a wife and mother the fires were again lighted. A period of forty years of uninterrupted operations is remarkable in the history of glass making in the United States.

Mr. Dummer was a man of great liberality. He was gifted with a high degree of practical common sense, and possessed an ardent love for the beautiful and the useful. To him the public of Jersey City are principally indebted for their park trees, and his example in setting out trees about all the property under his control induced others to follow the example. The amelioration of the condition of the laboring classes constantly occupied his mind even to the last days of his life, and he constantly introduced various sanitary and labor saving improvements in their abodes belonging to him, which materially added to their health, ease and comfort — a benefaction not very frequently imitated, and seldom duly appreciated. In 1826 he was chosen president of the board of selectmen of Jersey City, and held that office until 1830. A street was named after him, and although the present generation, ignorant of the days of old, have changed its name, his kindness of heart and the zeal with which he labored in the days of his strong health for the improvements and prosperity of Jersey City are still gratefully remembered by many.

<sup>1</sup>BENJAMIN KNOWER died 23d Aug., 1839, aged 64. He was from Massachusetts, and resided in Albany nearly forty years. He was a hatter, but also entered upon extensive commercial transactions. His place of business was in South-market street, a few doors below Hudson, on the west side. His career was distinguished

was indeed a man of strong mind and persevering energy of character. Through *his* influence, the charter of the Mechanics and Farmers' Bank was obtained; and the mechanics of the city of Albany rose in consideration and respect, personal and political, to a height which they had never before reached.

Among the merchants (I speak of the period from 1800 to 1808), Mr. Kane<sup>1</sup> was perhaps the most prominent. He was, indeed, in many respects, the most prominent man in the city: prominent from his extensive operations and business connections; prominent from his wealth, his liberality, his marked attention to strangers, his gentlemanly style of dress, and bachelor mode of living. He was distinguished, too, by an address and manner so singular for enterprise and public spirit, and he passed through it with a reputation for integrity unsullied, and for business capacity unsurpassed. He was for a long time connected with, and took an active part in the management of the Mechanics and Farmers' bank, of which he was president. In 1821 he was solicited to take the office of state treasurer, which he held until the fall of 1824, when he resigned. In his occupation as a hatter he had many apprentices, most of whom, as a matter of course, were without pecuniary means, or friends able to assist them. He seemed to regard it not only as a duty, but a source of personal gratification, to extend a helping hand at this critical moment in their lives.

<sup>1</sup>JAMES KANE died 2d April, 1851, aged 80, the last survivor of his family. He retired to rest at night as usual, and was found dead in his bed the next morning. The small room which he occupied in the fourth story of the American Hotel, in the south east corner, overlooked the beautiful grounds which he ornamented in his



larly polite and courteous as seemingly to border upon excess. But let it be remembered, to his honor, that as no man in the city was more generally known, so there was no one more generally or more highly respected. The courtesy or politeness of Mr. Kane did not, however, consist in mere

prosperous days, and he used to say jocosely, that his window gave him a view of *Jimmy Kane's walk*. It may have afforded him a melancholy satisfaction to contemplate the scene; but every year saw portions of it built upon. The grounds were first quartered by running Westerlo and Broad streets through them, upon which dwellings and churches were erected, but there still remained the old mansion, and many of the fine old trees which he had planted with his own hand.

The following tribute to his memory was paid by Bishop Alonzo Potter: "He had been for years the merchant prince of the city in which he lived. His ventures all seemed successful; his mansion was the home of a delightful hospitality; his grounds the delighted resort of all ages and ranks. There was no public charity, no plan of local or general improvement, which he did not gladly help forward. All at once he was arrested by one of those sudden and wide-spread revulsions that sweep like a tornado across our commercial world. The storm left him a complete wreck; everything he had on earth was surrendered to his creditors, and he stood forth rich in character and self-approbation, but penniless in purse. It was too late in life, as he thought, to retrieve his fallen fortunes. He loved books: he had neither wife nor child. He was surrounded by the friends of his youth, at whose houses he was always a welcome guest. A few creditors remitted their claims, and insisted upon his applying the proceeds to his personal wants. He reluctantly consented. For more than twenty years he lived amidst the scenes of his former prosperity a poor but contented and happy man. Books were friends that rarely parted company with him. They turned on him no cold looks; they gave him no half welcome; and I verily believe that never, even in the most brilliant days of a career that made him the observed of all observers, did he enjoy himself so well as

words or modes of expression. It had its foundation in good feeling—I may say in humanity, which speaks to the heart, and is understood where words are not; which, rising superior to forms and fashions, borrows nothing from art, nothing from eloquence.

I shall venture, by way of illustration, to give an instance of this sort of politeness. There appeared at the dinner table of the Tontine Coffee House, where Mr. Kane then boarded, and at a time when the house was crowded to excess, an old gentleman and his wife. They were very plainly dressed, but still respectable in their appearance. They were, evidently, country people, “from down east;” and were probably bound on a visit to their relations in the west. The servants, always too few in number, were now altogether insufficient to attend to the wants of the company at table. The old people, therefore, being strangers, and unknown to any one, were totally neglected. It was shameful! I made one or two efforts to get a servant to attend to them, but all in vain: there were too many louder while his whole stipend was two hundred dollars a year.”

It may be added that it was thought that the wealth of the Kanes was greatly overrated. They had branches at New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and in the Mohawk Valley, and are said to have obtained no small amount of capital by drawing on one another. They came from Orange county.

and more authoritative calls. At length, however, they were noticed by Mr. Kane, who looked round for his own servant, but finding him engaged, immediately left his seat and walked down to the lower end of the table where the old couple sat, and politely asked them what they would be helped to; took their plates to a side-table, carved for them himself, helped them to vegetables, bread, &c., and then returned quietly to his seat. He was doubtless taken by the old people, and perhaps *by other strangers*, for the master of the house, or the *head waiter!* There was certainly no gentleman present who dared to run the risk of being so mistaken. But Mr. Kane could afford it. The politeness, or, more properly speaking, the humanity of the act, did him honor, and far outweighed the momentary, or rather the *imaginary* loss of dignity.

As a people, we cannot be sufficiently grateful to Providence for the character of our ancestors. From the Puritans of England, the Huguenots of France, and the Protestants of the Netherlands, did this country derive the seeds and elements of its greatness: its purity of faith, its principles, and its power. To them, under Providence, are we indebted for our civil and religious liberties, the character of our institutions, and the hardy, resolute and enterprising spirit of the nation. Talents and virtues are alike

hereditary, though the stream is not always unbroken by shallows, nor the measure of its greatness always full. There must, I think, have been a strong fund of good sense and native talent in the early Dutch settlers. We have seen it break out occasionally, even in the fourth and fifth generations; and sometimes, too, quite unexpectedly, as in the case of Ex-President Van Buren,<sup>1</sup> whose immediate antecedents gave no promise of such an eruption, or even foreshadowed the probability of such an event. Still, in all such cases, there must have been a living spring (no matter how remote) from whence the waters flowed.

Among the Dutch families of Albany, in which a strong vein of original talent occasionally manifested itself, were those of the Schuylers, the Van Vechtens, the Lansings, and the Yateses. General Schuyler,<sup>2</sup> of the Revolution, was a man of great

<sup>1</sup>Martin Van Buren, while governor of the state, occupied a house in State street, next above the west corner of South-pearl, which had been erected by John Stevenson in the time of the Revolution, and was demolished in 1841.

<sup>2</sup>PHILIP SCHUYLER died 18th Nov., 1804, aged 83. The Dutch family of Schuyler stands conspicuous in our colonial annals. Colonel Peter Schuyler was mayor of Albany, and commander of the northern militia in 1690. He was distinguished for his probity and activity in all the various duties of civil and military life. No man understood better the relation of the colony with the Five Nations of Indians, or had more decided influence with that confederacy. He had frequently chastised the Canadian French for their destructive incursions upon the frontier settlements; and his



HOUSE OCCUPIED BY GOVERNOR VAN BUREN,

No. 92 State Street.

Erected 1780; Demolished 1841.



vigor of mind, strong sense, and sound judgment; which was happily associated with liberal feelings, zeal and energy were rewarded by a seat in the provincial council, and the house of assembly gave their testimony to the British court of his faithful services and good reputation. It was this same vigilant officer who gave intelligence to the inhabitants of Deerfield, on Connecticut river, of the designs of the French and Indians upon them, some short time before the destruction of that village in 1704. In 1720, as president of the council, he became acting governor of the colony for a short time, previous to the accession of Governor Burnet. His son, Colonel Philip Schuyler, was an active and efficient member of assembly for the city and county of Albany in 1743. But the Philip Schuyler here alluded to, and who in a subsequent age shed such signal lustre upon the family name, was born at Albany in the year 1733; and at an early age he began to display his active mind and military spirit. He was a captain in the New York levies at Fort Edward in 1755, and accompanied the British army in the expedition down Lake George in the summer of 1758. He was with Lord Howe when he fell by the fire of the enemy, on landing at the north end of the lake, and he was appointed to convey the body of that young and lamented nobleman to Albany, where he was buried with appropriate solemnities in the Episcopal church. We next find him under the title of Colonel Schuyler, in company with his compatriot George Clinton, in the year 1768, on the floor of the house of assembly, taking an active share in all their vehement discussions. On the nineteenth of June, 1775, Philip Schuyler was appointed by congress the third major general in the armies of the United Colonies. In July, 1775, he was placed at the head of a board of commissioners for the northern department, and in September, 1775, was acting under positive instructions to enter Canada; and he proceeded, with Generals Montgomery and Wooster under his command, to the Isle aux Noix. He had at that time become extremely ill, and was obliged to leave the command of the expedition to devolve upon Gen. Montgomery. His activity, skill and zeal shone conspicuously throughout that arduous northern campaign; and his unremitting correspondence received the most prompt and marked consideration. On the thirtieth of

and principles of honor and patriotism. He should by right have commanded that army in the revolu-

December, 1775, he was ordered to disarm the disaffected inhabitants of Tryon county, then under the influence of Sir John Johnson; and on the eighteenth of January following, he made a treaty with the disaffected portion of the people in the western part of that state. On the eighth of January, 1776, he was ordered to have the St. Lawrence river, above and below Quebec, well explored. On the twenty-fifth of January he was ordered to have the fortress of Ticonderoga repaired and made defensible; and on the seventeenth of February he was directed to take command of the forces, and conduct the military operations at the city of New York. All these cumulative and conflicting orders from congress were made upon him in the course of six weeks, and they were occasioned by the embarrassments and distresses of the times. In March, 1776, congress changed their plan of operation, and directed Gen. Schuyler to establish his head quarters at Albany, and superintend the army destined for Canada. By his thorough business habits, his precise attention to details, and by his skill and science in every duty connected with the equipment of an army, he was admirably fitted to be at the head of the commissariat; and he gave life and vigor to every branch of the service. On the fourteenth of June, 1776, he was ordered by congress to hold a treaty with the Six Nations, and engage them in the interest of the colonies. His preparations for taking immediate possession of Fort Stanwix, and erecting a fortification there, received the approbation of congress. He was ordered, on the seventeenth of June, to clear Wood creek, and construct a lock upon the creek at Skeensborough, and to take the level of the waters falling into the Hudson at Fort Edward and into Wood creek. On the first of August following, he was on the upper Mohawk, providing for its defense and security; and again in October we find him on the upper Hudson, and calling upon the Eastern states for their militia. There can be no doubt that the northern frontier, in the campaign of 1776, was indebted for its extraordinary quiet and security to the ceaseless activity of Gen. Schuyler. At the close of that year he was further instructed to build a floating battery on the lake, at the foot of Mount Independence, and also to strengthen the works at Fort Stanwix. In the



tionary war, which, in the day of battle, he joined as a volunteer,—a man greatly his inferior having

midst of such conflicting and harassing services, he had excited much popular jealousy and ill will, arising from the energy of his character and the dignity of his deportment, and in October, 1776, tendered to congress the resignation of his commission; but when congress came to investigate his services, they found them, says the historian of Washington, far to exceed in value any estimate which had been made of them. They declared that they could not dispense with his services, during the then situation of affairs; and they directed the president of congress to request him to continue in his command, and they declared their high sense of his services in the memorable campaign of 1777. Gen. Schuyler was still in the command of the whole northern department, and he made every exertion to check the progress of the enemy. Ticonderoga being assailed, and suddenly evacuated by Gen. St. Clair, Gen. Schuyler met on the upper Hudson the news of the retreat; and he displayed, says the candid and accurate historian of Washington, the utmost diligence and judgment in that gloomy state of things. He effectually impeded the navigation of Wood creek. He rendered the roads impassable. He removed every kind of provisions and stores beyond the reach of the enemy. He summoned the militia of New York and New England to his assistance; and he answered the proclamation of Burgoyne by a counter proclamation, equally addressed to the hopes and fears of the country. Congress, by their resolution of the seventeenth of July, 1777, approved all the acts of Gen. Schuyler in reference to the army at Ticonderoga; but the evacuation of that fortress excited great discontent in the United States, and Gen. Schuyler did not escape his share of the popular clamor, and he was made a victim to appease it. It was deemed expedient to recall the general officers in the northern army, and in the month of August he was superseded in the command of that department by the arrival of Gen. Gates. The laurels which he was in preparation to win by his judicious and distinguished efforts, and which he would very shortly have attained, were by that removal intercepted from his brow. Gen. Schuyler felt acutely the discredit of being recalled in the most critical and interesting period of the campaign

been placed over his head. But no neglect or injury could alienate his feelings, or weaken his attachment to the cause of his country.

of 1777, and when the labor and activity of making preparations to repair the disaster of it had been expended by him; and when an opportunity was opening, as he observed, for that resistance and retaliation which might bring glory upon our arms. If error be attributable to the evacuation of Ticonderoga, says the historian of Washington, no portion of it was committed by Gen. Schuyler. But his removal, though unjust and severe as respected himself, was rendered expedient, according to Chief Justice Marshall, as a sacrifice to the prejudices of New England. He was present at the capture of Burgoyne, but without any personal command, and the urbanity of his manners, and the chivalric magnanimity of his character, smarting as he was under the extent and severity of his pecuniary losses, was attested by Gen. Burgoyne himself in his speech in 1778 in the British house of commons. He there declared, that, by his orders, "a very good dwelling-house, exceeding large store-houses, great saw-mills, and other out-buildings, to the value altogether perhaps of 10,000*l.*, belonging to Gen. Schuyler, at Saratoga, were destroyed by fire, a few days before the surrender." He said further, that one of the first persons he saw after the convention was signed, was General Schuyler; and when expressing to him his regret at the event which had happened to his property, Gen. Schuyler desired him "to think no more of it, and that the occasion justified it according to the principles and rules of war. He did more," said Burgoyne; "he sent an aid-de-camp to conduct me to Albany, in order, as he expressed it, to procure better quarters than a stranger might be able to find. That gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and, to my great surprise, presented me to Mrs. Schuyler and her family. In that house I remained during my whole stay in Albany, with a table with more than twenty covers for me and my friends, and every other possible demonstration of hospitality." He had been elected to congress in 1777, and he was reelected in each of three following years. On his return to congress, after the termination of his military life, his talents, experience and energy were put in immediate requisition. In 1781





ABRAHAM VAN VECHTEN.

Nat. 1762; Ob. 1837.

The talents and character of Abraham Van Vechten,<sup>1</sup> are still fresh in the memory of the

he was in the senate of this state. In 1789 he was elected to a seat in the first senate of the United States; and when his term of service expired in congress, he was replaced in the senate of this state. In 1792 he was very active in digesting and bringing to maturity that early and great measure of state policy, the establishment of companies for inland lock navigation. He was placed at the head of the direction of both of the navigation companies, and his mind was ardently directed for years towards the execution of those liberal plans of internal improvement. In 1796 he urged in his place in the senate, and afterwards published in a pamphlet form, his plan for the improvement of the revenue of this state; and in 1797 his plan was almost literally adopted, and to that we owe the institution of the office of comptroller. In 1797 he was unanimously elected by the two houses of our legislature, a senator in congress; and he took leave of the senate of this state in a liberal and affecting address, which was inserted at large upon their journals. But the life of this great man was drawing to a close. His faculties seemed to retain their unimpaired vigor and untiring activity, though he had evidently lost some of his constitutional ardor of temperament and vehemence of feeling. He was sobered by age, chastened by affliction, broken by disease; and yet nothing could surpass the interest excited by the mild radiance of the evening of his days.—*James Kent.*

<sup>1</sup>ABRAHAM VAN VECHTEN died 6th Jan., 1837. He was born at Catskill, 5th Dec., 1762; was married 24th May, 1784, to Catharine, daughter of Philip P. Schuyler and Anna Wendell. He received his elementary education at a public school in Esopus, now Kingston, and entered upon the scenes of active life soon after the revolutionary war. He pursued his professional studies under the direction of the late Chancellor Lansing, and began the practice of law in the county of Montgomery, but was soon invited to occupy a more extensive field in the city of Albany. The high places at the bar were then filled by a gifted race of advocates, among whom were Hamilton, Harrison, Jones, Burr and Livingston. But the brilliancy of the bar could not cast young

living. He was one of the ablest members of the Albany bar, when that bar was studded with eminent names.

Van Vechten in the shade. He soon ranked among his illustrious seniors as an equal and a competitor for the highest professional eminence. Untiring in his efforts, the powers of his highly gifted mind were continually developed and expanded. His intellect was formed to grapple with the most abstruse and difficult subjects of judicial investigation; and he early inured himself to the most intense application of mental industry. In acuteness and the ready comprehension of any subject presented for his investigation, he had few equals. And nature seemed to have furnished him with powers eminently adapted to the illustration of legal principles. He made no display of legal lore, his learning seemed to be incorporated with his thoughts. What he had once read was well digested and remained ever ready for application. A large portion of his life was spent in the discussion of legal questions in our highest tribunals of law and equity; there he was always listened to with profound attention by our most eminent judges. His arguments were calculated to elucidate and instruct, and greatly to aid the tribunals to which they were addressed in forming correct conclusions. His style was remarkable for purity, perspicuity and strength. His train of thought was always logical and correct. In his manner he was usually calm and unimpassioned, yet earnest and forcible. His talents were too conspicuous to allow him to confine his efforts to the bar. He was repeatedly chosen to represent his fellow citizens in both branches of the legislature. The senate chamber was the theatre of some of his highest intellectual efforts. As a member of the court for the correction of errors he has left behind him enduring monuments of his legal wisdom. For a number of years he filled the office of attorney general with distinguished ability. At an early period of his life a seat on the bench of the supreme court was offered to him by Gov. Jay; a similar offer was made to him at a later period. He declined these proffered honors, preferring the labors of the bar as more congenial to his habits and his feelings. The causes in our books of re-

Chancellor Lansing,<sup>1</sup> though not possessed of shining talents, was nevertheless a man of good

ports in which he took a part as counsel, numerous as they are, give but a faint idea of the amount of professional labor performed by him. For more than half a century his brilliant mind was constantly shedding its light over the jurisprudence of the state. The bar had long delighted to accord to him the highest honors they could bestow. To the younger members of the profession he had greatly endeared himself by his kindness and courteous manners; and by all he was venerated as an illustrious model of professional excellence. In his daily consultations with his clients he was emphatically a peace maker. It was his constant habit to advise to the settlement of disputes whenever it was practicable. He allowed no sordid motives to influence his advice, or to bias his mind in giving his opinions.

He was recorder of the city of Albany from 1797 to 1808; state senator from 1798 to 1805, and from 1816 to 1820; member of assembly from 1805 to 1815; attorney general of the state for the year 1810, and was again appointed in 1813, and served two years; and was a member of the constitutional convention of 1821.

His character as a citizen in the private walks of life afforded a model of excellence. He constantly displayed in his intercourse with his neighbors and acquaintances the most amiable social qualities which adorn the human heart. To his other traits of character was added one which is justly deemed of far the most importance; he was a sincere believer in the Savior of the world and a venerated member of the Dutch Reformed Church. In her judicatories his paternal counsels were listened to with reverence, as eminently calculated to promote the peace and prosperity of the church. His disinterestedness was a prominent feature in his character and was the foundation of that unbounded confidence which was reposed in him by all who knew him. In his domestic circle he was remarkable for kindness and affectionate attention to the feelings and wants of those who were dependent upon him.

<sup>1</sup>JOHN LANSING JR. disappeared on the 12th December, 1829, in the city of New York, and was never more heard of. He went out from the City Hotel in the evening, which was stormy, it is

abilities and of strict integrity. His brother, Abraham G.,<sup>1</sup> was a man of sound sense and vigorous tone of mind; rough, and somewhat abrupt in his manner, but upright, frank and fearless, in conduct and in character.

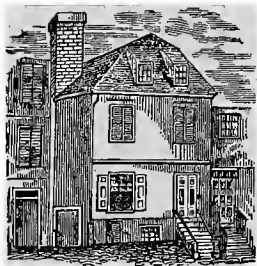
supposed to deposit a letter in the box which was provided in the river steam-boats, for the accommodation of letters too late for the mail, and is supposed to have been drowned. His age was 76. No event had caused a deeper sensation in the city since the death of De Witt Clinton. At an early period of his life he entered the office of Robert Yates, afterwards chief justice, as a clerk in the study of the law. He afterwards became a member of the military family of Gen Philip Schuyler, and during the revolutionary war was a distinguished member of the state convention that conducted the civil and military operations of the state. He soon after was appointed mayor of the city, and in 1787 was, with Chief Justice Yates and General Hamilton, delegated by the state as a member of the convention which formed the constitution of the United States. It is well known what part those gentlemen took in the discussions connected with that subject. Chief Justice Yates and Chancellor Lansing withdrew from the convention, and were known as anti-federalists. They opposed the adoption of the constitution principally because it did not more effectually secure the rights of the individual states; and to those men and their copatriots we are indebted for the ten amended articles which were subsequently made a part of that constitution. On his return he was made a judge of the supreme court, chief justice and finally chancellor of the state. His residence was on the north-west corner of Broadway and Steuben street. For a more extended sketch of him see Street's *Council of Revision*, 159-64.

<sup>1</sup>ABRAHAM G. LANSING died in Sept., 1834, aged 77. He was an active supporter of the American revolution, and held several important offices during that struggle; at the close of the war he received appointments to various responsible offices, state and national, all of which he discharged creditably.



Old Judge Yates,<sup>1</sup> one of the members of the convention that framed the constitution, was a clear-headed, strong-minded man; straight forward, honest and patriotic. His son, John Van Ness Yates,<sup>2</sup> was a man of talents, both natural and acquired. He was equal to the duties of any station, and to the difficulties of any task. He was a wit, a poet, a belles-lettres scholar, and a boon companion, whose joke was ever ready, and whose laugh was contagious. He wanted nothing but industry and self-respect, to have made him eminent as a lawyer. His associations were beneath

<sup>1</sup> ROBERT YATES, a man of great intellectual power, was born in Schenectady, 27th Jan., 1738; in 1777 he was appointed one of the first justices of the supreme court of the state, and in 1790 became chief justice. His house stood on the site of 106 State street, and was after his death occupied by his son John Van Ness Yates. After the death of the latter it was converted to divers uses, until 26th June, 1855, when it was demolished, for the erection of the present structure. In 1765 Mr. Yates married Jane Van Ness; he died 9th September, 1801. For an extended biography of him see Street's *Council of Revision*, 168-72.



<sup>2</sup> JOHN VAN NESS YATES died 10th Jan., 1838, aged 60. He held various civil and military offices, and was secretary of state in 1824. In 1807 a quota of 12,000 men was required to be raised to prevent British aggression; he commanded a company of light infantry, which unanimously tendered their services to the president, and signified to him by letter their immediate readiness for actual service.

him, not only in point of talent, but in character; yet they affected his interests rather than his principles. He possessed the readiest apprehension, and the most retentive memory, of any man I ever knew. All that he had ever read, and he had read a vast deal, was at his fingers ends. He was often consulted by the younger members of the bar, while walking in the streets; and, without a moment's hesitation, would take out his pencil and write down what was the law in the case, and where it was to be found—volume, chapter and verse. From these frequent street consultations, he was called *The Walking Library*.

But the cleverest man of the name or family, was John W. Yates.<sup>1</sup> He was a man of education, of talents, of natural eloquence, and of extensive reading. He was the best classical scholar in the city—Judge Kent not excepted. He was familiar with the Greek, Latin and French languages and literature; a mathematician, and a passionate lover of the belles-lettres. He was bred to the law but

<sup>1</sup> JOHN W. YATES, cashier of the New York State Bank died 28th March, 1828, aged 58. He received a liberal education, having been graduated at Columbia College in 1787. Although educated for the bar, he became a clerk in the Bank of Albany, where he continued until the incorporation of the New York State Bank, when he received the appointment of its first cashier. He held the office twenty-four years, and sustained the character of a man of integrity and of business talents.

never attempted to practice ; yet, I repeat, he was naturally eloquent, and, in his buoyant moments, one of the most lively and agreeable men in conversation that I ever met with.

Such a man, it is natural to suppose, made a figure in his day : no such thing ; he made no figure at all. He was not appreciated by the public, because the public knew nothing of him. He was not known even to his friends, for the very good and sufficient reason that his friends knew nothing of Greek or Latin, of mathematics or of poetry. It was curious to find him reading Homer with a pipe in his mouth ; and to see him turn from the page of Thucydides, to talk Dutch. Yet this alternation between the languages of Athens and Amsterdam, was in some measure unavoidable ; for many of his old friends, and indeed most of the old families, continued to speak, in their domestic circles, the language of their ancestors long after the period to which these sketches refer.

Though no man set a higher value upon literary acquirements than himself, yet he took no pains to exhibit, much less to profit by those he possessed. Political distinction he never sought, and never desired. He had no taste for popular parade, no love for public display. He was in fact better acquainted with Pericles and Xenophon than he

was with the alderman of the ward in which he lived. His knowledge of ancient history was more perfect than that of any other man I ever knew, nor was that of modern Europe less familiar. History, poetry and philosophy; Egypt and Asia, Athens and Rome, with all their classic superstitions and diviner arts, were the subjects of many an evening conversation, to which I listened with delight.

To this faint sketch of his literary character, I may add, that no man possessed a higher sense of honor, or was governed in his conduct by purer principles. His talents and his tastes were, indeed, altogether above the position in which he was placed; and hence, instead of giving him celebrity, they served but to render him, in some measure, unsuited to the station he held. But never will that station, or that official rank, be again honored with so much learning, combined with so much talent.

Let it not be supposed that this is a mere fancy sketch, "writ for the sake of writing it." It is a tribute justly due to the memory of a man whose merits were unappreciated, and comparatively unknown. It is a tribute which I owe to the recollection of his partiality and kindness; to the memory of many a friendly lecture — many a social — many a pleasant hour.

Of the public men of Albany, office holders, politicians and jurists, it may be expected that I should say something. Among the most prominent were George Clinton,<sup>1</sup> John Taylor,<sup>2</sup> Ambrose Spencer,<sup>3</sup> James Kent,<sup>4</sup> Chancellor Lansing,<sup>5</sup> Abra-

<sup>1</sup>GEORGE CLINTON, first governor of the state of New York, and vice-president of the United States, was the youngest son of Col. Charles Clinton. He died 20th April, 1812, aged 72.

<sup>2</sup>JOHN TAYLER was born in New York, 4th July, 1742, and at the age of 17 removed to Albany. In the last two years of the French war he was with the army at Lake George and Oswego as a trader, and at the latter place acquired the Indian language. He continued in this employment until 1771, when he settled on a small farm at Stillwater, where he resided two years, and returned to Albany. He engaged in trade, and early in the revolution was entrusted by Gen. Schuyler with an important service in Canada. He was subsequently elected a member of the provincial congress and state convention. In 1777-79, '80, '81, '86, '87, he was in the assembly, and in 1802 and 1804-14 in the senate. Upon the death of Lieut. Gov. Broome, he was chosen president of the senate, Jan., 1811; and from 1814 to 1822 he held the office of lieutenant governor by election; and from Feb. 24 to July, 1817, he acted as governor in place of Gov. Tompkins, elected to the vice-presidency. In 1802 he was elected a regent of the university, and in 1814 became chancellor of the board. He died at his residence in Albany, 19th March, 1829. His house was the site of the present Cooper's Building. His portrait hangs in the New York State Bank at Albany, of which he was the first president. See Street's *Council of Revision*, 147.

<sup>3</sup>AMBROSE SPENCER died 13th March, 1848, aged 82. He was attorney general in 1802, and judge of the supreme court in 1819. Although a Federalist at first, he early joined the Republicans, and was the warm friend of De Witt Clinton, two of whose sisters he married for his second and third wives. His residence was in Washington street, since occupied by his son John C.

<sup>4</sup>JAMES KENT died in New York, 12th Dec., 1847, aged 84.

<sup>5</sup>JOHN LANSING Jr., ante, p. 63.

ham Van Vechten,<sup>1</sup> John V. Henry,<sup>2</sup> John Woodworth,<sup>3</sup> Thos. Tillotson,<sup>4</sup> Abraham G. Lansing,<sup>5</sup> Elisha Jenkins,<sup>6</sup> Edmond Charles Genet,<sup>7</sup> and last,

<sup>1</sup> ABRAHAM VAN VECHTEN, ante, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> JOHN V. HENRY fell in the street and died of apoplexy, 22d Oct., 1829, aged 64.

<sup>3</sup> JOHN WOODWORTH died 1st June, 1858, aged 90. See *Reminiscences of Troy*, 2d ed., p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> THOMAS TILLOTSON was secretary of state from 1801 to 1807; he came from Redhook, Dutchess county, and returned thither. He was also member of assembly in 1788, and state senator from 1791 to 1799.

<sup>5</sup> ELISHA JENKINS. — This gentleman was the most distinguished member of the once numerous and wealthy family whose name is inseparably connected with the early history of the city of Hudson. Though liberally educated, his turn of mind led him to mercantile rather than to professional pursuits: and he became a leading partner in the well known house of Thomas Jenkins & Sons. Retiring from business with a competent fortune, he took an active part in the political contest that brought Mr. Jefferson into power. Shortly after that event, he removed from Hudson to Albany, where he received the appointment of comptroller, and subsequently that of secretary of state. He was a man of excellent sense and sound judgment: and carried with him into public life, amenity of manners, strict integrity, and business habits. He was an accomplished merchant, an upright and intelligent public officer, a liberal minded politician, and a perfect gentleman in every walk of life.

<sup>6</sup> EDMOND C. GENET died at his farm in Greenbush near Albany, 14th July, 1834, aged 71. He arrived in this country in 1793, as minister plenipotentiary from France, to reside at Charleston; but having authorized the arming of vessels in that port against nations with whom the nation was at peace, his recall was demanded by Washington. Yet he continued to reside here during his lifetime, took an interest in agriculture, and the improvement of the navigation of the river below Albany, advocating a ship canal, which he followed up with great pertinacity for a number of years, but without success.





SOLOMON SOUTHWICK.



though not least, the editor of the *Albany Register*, Solomon Southwick ! These are names too well known to require any comment. *Many* of them are identified with the history of the state, and will be chronicled in its pages.

I cannot in courtesy, however, pass over my old friend Southwick,<sup>1</sup> without some other notice than that of a mere casual glance of recognition.

Southwick was a man of genius, with all the peculiarities that belong to that temperament — its strength and its weakness, its excellencies and its errors : its delusive dreams and visions, its providence and its instability. He had great fertility of mind, united with great enthusiasm. This was the source of his eloquence and his power. His writings were rather *outpourings* than compositions. Yet he imbued them with so much life and animation, that he seldom failed to carry his readers with them. His style, though well adapted to the popular ear, was redundant in epithet, inflated and declamatory, and his language, though often strong and impressive, was yet in the main, loose and

<sup>1</sup> SOLOMON SOUTHWICK was born at Newport, R. I., 25th Dec., 1773, and died in Albany, 18th Nov., 1839, aged 66. He came to this city in 1792, and connected himself with the *Albany Register*, conducted by Robert Barber, whose sister he married, and whom he succeeded, as proprietor of the *Register*, in 1808. For an extended biography of him see *Annals of Albany*, V, 104. His widow died 30 Jan., 1861, aged 88.

inelegant. He read but little, and only from necessity. He referred to books for particular facts, rather than for general information.

He was, by nature, honest, warm-hearted and generous to a fault, but seemed to have no fixed or settled principles. In ethics, as well as in politics, he traveled from pole to pole. Yet the kindness of his nature went with him and never forsook him. His heart and his hand were always open; and as he was credulous to excess, and even superstitious, he was, as a matter of course, swindled by every knave, and duped by every impostor he met with upon the road.

He was extremely fluent and even eloquent in conversation. But he had little knowledge of the world, and the predominance of interest or of passion, left his judgment too often at fault. He had the finest eye and forehead that ever belonged to mortal man, but every feature of his face was either indifferent or defective. His countenance, therefore, was an index to the character of his mind—incongruous, mixed, and full of contradictions.

The *Albany Register*,<sup>1</sup> which he so long and ably edited, was pronounced, by Judge Spencer,

<sup>1</sup>The *Albany Register* was begun in 1788, by the Republicans, the *Albany Gazette* having become identified with the Federal party.





MECHANICS AND FARMERS' BANK.

Erected 1811.

to be the "*Political Bible* of the Western District." A greater compliment was certainly never paid to the conductor of a political journal.

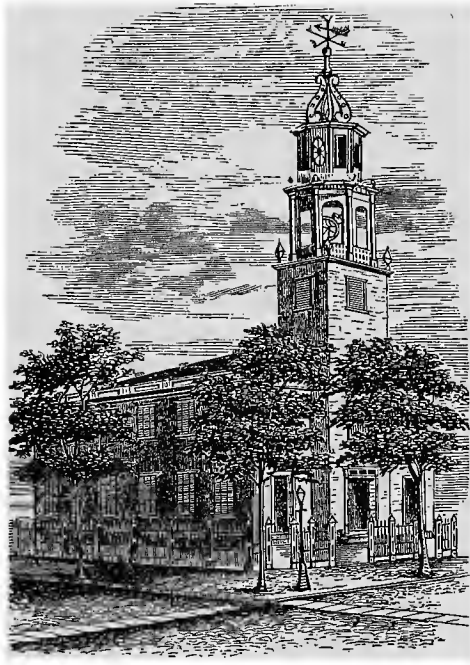
Mr Southwick held, at different periods, the office of state printer, clerk of the house of assembly, sheriff of the county of Albany, president of the Mechanics and Farmers' Bank, and post-master of the city. Even in the cloudy days of his latter years, when friends, fame and fortune had forsaken him, when every objectionable act of his life was spread upon the record, and all his faults and weaknesses blazoned to the public eye; even then he received over *thirty thousand votes* for governor of the state.

For a long time both parties had used the columns of the latter paper, the editors refraining from any political writing of their own, and when the proceedings of political meetings were too voluminous for the small sheet then printed, the surplus matter was issued in handbills, or *broad-sides*. Robert Barber, who had been an apprentice in the Gazette office, purchased his remaining time, and was placed at the head of the Register. John Barber, the brother of Robert, was a teacher, and his assistance was called into the concern. Robert died in 1808, and John in 1812. Mr. Southwick came into the establishment in 1792, and soon took a prominent position in it. He wielded a great power during nearly a quarter of a century; but it was announced in the *Register* of 13th May, 1817, that it was determined to stop its publication, not for want of subscribers, he says, but on account of their *delinquency*. His subscribers are supposed to have been universally acquainted with the story related by Rabelais, of one Phillipot Plact, who though brisk and hale, fell dead as he was paying an old debt, which doubtless deterred them from paying theirs, fearing a like accident.

Of the clergy of those days, if I am wise, I shall say but little: first, because I recollect but little; and secondly, because with me, the subject is not a debatable one. One's opinions, unless moulded early, are often formed by accident, or spring up as the result of circumstances. It has often occurred to me as not a little singular, that my attention should have been turned to the unkindred subjects of politics and religion, at about the same period of time. The noise and triumph of Mr. Jefferson's election to the presidency, led me to look a little into the mysterious philosophy of party politics; and the preaching of Dr. Nott,<sup>1</sup> carried me, *nolens volens*, into the Presbyterian *brick church* of South-pearl street.<sup>2</sup> Thus I acquired, at nearly one and the same time, a decided inclination to *church and state*; or, in

<sup>1</sup> Of all the persons mentioned in these reminiscences, it is believed Dr. Nott is the only survivor. He was born in Ashford, Conn., 25th June, 1773.

<sup>2</sup> This is the oldest church edifice in the city, having been erected in 1796, and is now occupied by the Congregationalists, under Dr. Palmer. There were not at this time more than seven or eight church edifices. Two of these were Dutch Reformed, one Lutheran, one Episcopal, one Presbyterian, one German Reformed, which may at this time have been occupied by the Seceders, and one Catholic. These are mentioned in the order of seniority. There was also a society of Scotch Presbyterians, and of Methodists; the traveler Rochefaucault-Liancourt says the latter had a society here in 1794; whether they had a church or worshipped in private houses does not appear.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
Now Congregational.





other words, a marked taste for politics and preaching. No one certainly, could have studied under abler masters ; and for many of the opinions I entertain to this day, I hold those masters responsible.

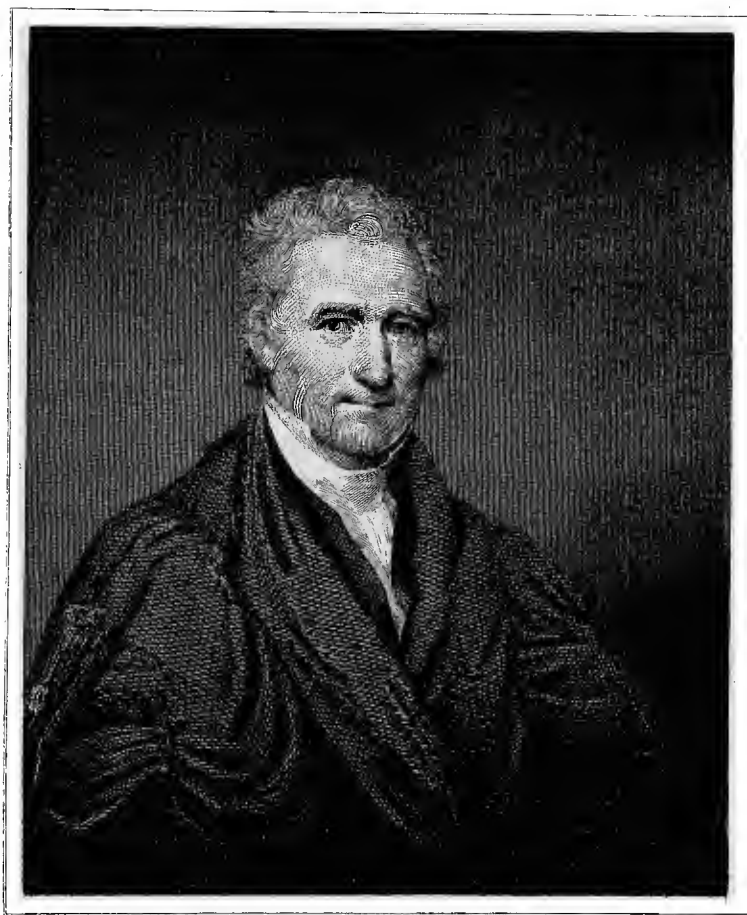
But the only names belonging to the church, of which my memory took cognizance, at the period referred to, or of which I have any distinct recollection, are those of Nott, Romaine and Bradford.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Bradford was a well educated — well read — and gentlemanly man. He was, moreover, one of the handsomest men in the city, which in the minds or fancies of the fairer part of his congregation, added no doubt to his eloquence, and of course to his usefulness in the church. Mr. Romaine was an able man, of a denunciatory and vehement style of oratory — altogether too Calvinistic to suit the taste of his hearers. But it must be remembered that,

<sup>1</sup> JOHN MELANCTHON BRADFORD was born in Danbury, Conn., 15th May, 1781, and was ordained and installed pastor of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in Albany, 11th Aug., 1805. He was called by resolution of an extraordinary meeting of the great consistory, under a salary of \$1,500. He was to be required to preach but once on each sabbath, during the first year, and his salary was to be increased \$250 in the event of his marriage. He continued in the pastoral charge about fifteen years, commanding large audiences, and ranking among the distinguished pulpit orators of the day. He died 25th March, 1826, aged 45.

“ No rogue that e'er felt the halter draw,  
With good opinion of the law.”

Doctor Nott, I should say, was neither a Calvinist nor a Lutheran. In other words he was no bigoted sectarian; and in this respect, he bore, and still bears I think, but little resemblance to many of his clerical brethren. In *mind*, as well as in *manner*, he stood alone. The narrow dogmas, and common place oratory of the church, were beneath him. His ambition was to make men *wiser* and *better*, rather than to promote the sectarian interests and speculative tenets of the church. The eloquent enforcement of that single injunction “to do unto others as you would have others do unto you,” would to an unsophisticated mind be of more efficacy than a dozen dry discourses *upon evidence*, which no novice requires, or upon those knotty points in theology, which no intellect can comprehend. But it is not my business to preach, nor am I disposed to criticise the preaching of others. All I mean to say is, that Doctor Nott was by far the most eloquent and effective preacher of the period to which I refer; that he drew together the largest congregation — made the deepest impression, and commanded the profoundest respect.



Painted by Ames

Eng by A. J. Durand.

REV. ELIPHALET NOTT D.D. LL.D.



His church was filled to overflowing. His appearance in the pulpit, his style of eloquence, his very look,

“Drew audience and attention still as night,  
Or summer’s noontide air. . . .”

His elocution was admirable, and his manner altogether better, because more impressive, than that of any other preacher of the day: yet he could not, I think, have been over twenty-eight or thirty years of age when I first heard him, which was in 1803. Shortly afterwards I had the pleasure of becoming personally acquainted with him, and soon found he possessed powers and qualities of which his congregation little dreamed. His talents were by no means confined to pulpit eloquence, nor even to the wider range of clerical duties. His information extended to almost every department of life; and with the whole fabric of human society he was perfectly familiar. He understood the animal *man*, not only in the abstract, but in all the detail of action, passion and propensity. He was, moreover, a mechanist, a political economist, a philosopher, and what is of more consequence in *any walk of life*, a man of keen observation and sound sense. But he is still living, and too widely known, to require any portraiture from my pen.

## BATTLE IN STATE STREET.

Among other incidents and events, falling within the range of these reminiscences, was the famous *passage of arms*, that took place between an eminent citizen and a distinguished general,<sup>1</sup> in one of the principal streets of the city, in open day. It was a perilous, hand to hand encounter, that brought together, at least, one half of the male population of the town — not as spectators merely, but as combatants, who, like the knights of old, entered the lists with an alacrity and a spirit that would have

<sup>1</sup>JOHN TAYLER and SOLOMON VAN RENSSELAER. This affray took place 21st April, 1807, a few days before the general election. It grew out of the hostility engendered among the leaders of the two great parties, the Federalists and Republicans, by the publication of incendiary resolutions in the public newspapers and in handbills, which became lurid with patriotic emotion, as the day of election appropinquated. The pungent resolutions of the Republicans at their meeting whereat Mr. Elisha Jenkins was secretary, sat heavily upon the brain-pans of the Federalists, and pricked on Gen. Solomon Van Rensselaer to test the efficacy of personal chastisement. Accordingly, as appears by the testimony of witnesses, he overtook Mr. Jenkins walking leisurely down State street, and felled him with his cane. In the afternoon of the same day, as he was perambulating the same street, he was accosted by Gov. Tayler anent the unprovoked assault of the morning. The parties immediately squared off for an encounter, and a multitude at once surrounded them. As they were very nearly in front of Gov. Tayler's house, Dr. Charles D. Cooper came to the assistance of his father-in-law, and attempted to separate the combatants; Mrs. Cooper also entering the *mélée* for the same purpose. Francis Bloodgood, another relation by marriage, approached Gen. Van Rensselaer from be-

done honor to the heroes of chivalry, when chivalry was in its prime, and knighthood in its glory. The full breadth of State street, from Pearl down to the intersection of Court and Market, was literally filled with the combatants; while the doors, porches, windows, and even the house-tops on both sides, were crowded with astonished and terrified spectators. The street, viewed from any elevated position, resembled a tumultuous *sea of heads*, over which clattered a forest of canes; the vast body now surging this way, now that, as the tide of combat ebbed or flowed. It was, certainly, one of the

hind, and struck him down with a cane. Here the combatants were separated, Gen. Van Rensselaer being very seriously wounded. A trial of both cases of assault and battery ensued, on the 16th, 17th and 18th August, 1808, before Simeon De Witt, James Kane, and John Van Schaick, arbitrators. The following awards were given, with costs against the defendants in each case:

Jenkins against Van Rensselaer,.....	\$2,500.
Van Rensselaer against Tayler,.....	300.
Van Rensselaer against Cooper,.....	500.
Van Rensselaer against Bloodgood,.....	3,700.

The trial was published in a pamphlet, where the curious reader may find the whole testimony elicited, and the arguments at length of the eminent counsel, six in number; consisting of Abraham Van Vechten, Elisha Williams and John Woodworth, for Gen. Van Rensselaer; and Thomas R. Gold, Ebenezer Foote and John Champlin, for Messrs. Jenkins, Tayler, Cooper and Bloodgood. Gov. Tayler was then sixty-five years of age, and Gen. Van Rensselaer in the prime of life. The excitement of political strife never before nor since drew men of their character and standing into such an extraordinary collision in the streets of Albany.

most classic or Greek-like battles that had been fought since the wars of Ilium, and the heroic days of Hector and Achilles. But as it respects the origin of the war, the names of the combatants and the details of the fight, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel! If not, they may, perhaps, be found in the chronicles of the lives of the illustrious fathers of the city. Certain it is that the battle has already been described; and the record, like the Iliad, will be found imperishable!

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It is a little curious, when we consider what Albany now is, to look back and recollect, that so late as 1803, there was but *one* public house in the city; or, at least, but *one* in any respect better than a common signpost tavern, such as no gentleman of the present day would put his foot in: but that *one* was an excellent one. I allude to the Tontine Coffee House in State street, kept by Mr. Gregory:<sup>1</sup> a house distinguished from all other public houses of that day, by the quiet order that

<sup>1</sup> MATTHEW GREGORY was born in a part of Norwalk, Conn., now Wilton, 21st August, 1757. His father was Ezra Gregory, who was born in the same place in 1726, and his grandfather Deacon Matthew Gregory, born 1680, beyond whom the family cannot be traced. The house occupied by the latter is supposed to have been erected about 1650, and was succeeded by the present Gregory

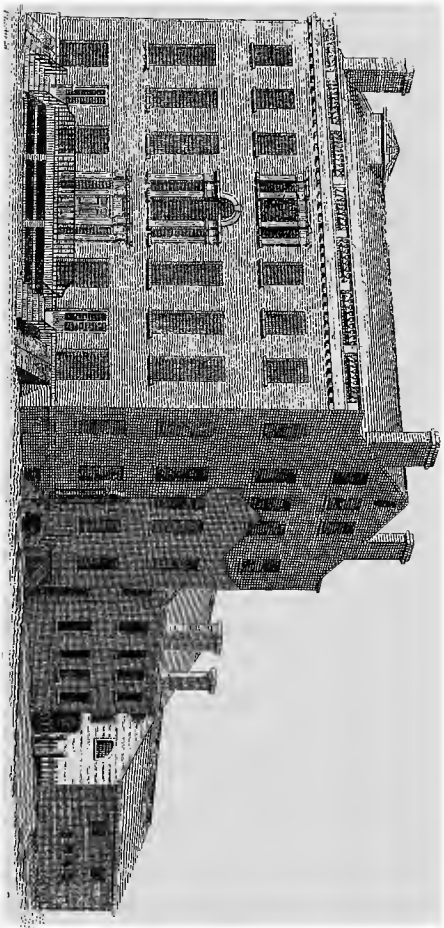


reigned through all its departments; by its perfect neatness, and the total absence of a bar. The higher rates of fare charged at the Tontine, and the fact

House in 1750, which is still in excellent repair. It was built about two hundred feet from the site of the first house by Deacon Matthew Gregory who died in it in May, 1777, aged 97. His arm chair is still preserved. His sons were Matthew and Ezra, the latter born 21st May, 1726, married 20th Jan., 1751, and died at the Gregory House (where he lived, and where all his children were born) at a time of life not much past his prime. He had seven sons and two daughters, most of whom lived to an advanced age. The third son was Matthew, the subject of this sketch. The youngest daughter, Mrs. Betts, is still living at Meadville, Penn., aged 95. The fourth son was Moses, who occupied the homestead till his death, 23d May, 1837, aged 75—a homestead which has known six generations, whose lives reach back through a period of one hundred and eighty-five years. To this place the members of the family have ever made periodical visits, especially on the feast days of Connecticut. The neat old mansion, the old door with its glass-eyed windows, the trees with their heavy and luxuriant foliage, are there as in other days—but the sound of familiar footsteps and voices are no more—the Gregory House has but a single occupant. Mr. Gregory entered the army a month after the war was declared, at the age of 17. He received the warrant of serjeant in the 8th Connecticut regiment, Col. John Chandler, 1st July, 1777; 19th Nov., 1778, was promoted to serjeant-major, and 20th April, 1779, was commissioned an ensign by congress. He was at the battles of White Plains, Monmouth, and perhaps at Trenton. He shared the hardships of the forlorn hope at Valley Forge during the terrible winter of 1777–78. In the latter years of his life he frequently reverted to the hardships he endured there, “sleeping on hoop poles, having only salt meat, and but little of it, and getting the scurvy.” He participated in the capture of Cornwallis, which was a theme his enthusiasm kindled upon to the latest period of his life. It was also one of the proud events of his soldier life, that while he was with the army during one winter at West Point, he dined three times with General Washington. On the 10th February, 1783, he was commissioned by congress first lieutenant

that no liquors were sold except to its own boarders, nor *ever seen* except at table, excluded the *low* and *thirsty*, and left it, as it were, by a law of its nature,

in the Connecticut line. He was in the service seven years and eight months, lacking but one month of the whole period of the war. On the termination of the war Lieut. Gregory returned to his native town. In 1789 he became a member of the Cincinnati, his diploma of membership bearing the signature of Washington. About 1791 he removed to Waterford, Sar. Co., N. Y., where he kept a small inn, at which Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison were severally his guests. He came to Albany in 1803, and took charge of the Tontine, which was a distinguished institution of the city. His education had been mostly gained in the army. In business he was prompt, attentive, industrious and careful; his manners dignified, but cold. He was a man of great neatness, exact in his dress, having always the appearance and manner of a gentleman, and wore the style of dress incident to the fashion of the latter part of the last century, as late as 1816. Mr. Gregory became the proprietor of the Eagle Tavern, on the corner of Court and Hamilton streets it is thought as early as 1806. It was conducted on the same general plan as the Tontine had been, and was almost equally distinguished. It was a great place of resort during the war with Great Britain. Having acquired a fortune, Mr. Gregory retired from business in 1814, at the age of 57, and purchased the property known as Congress Hall, in one of the residences of which he lived nearly thirty-five years. From this time his life and surroundings were that of a gentleman of leisure. He was one of the committee appointed to meet Gen. La Fayette and escort him to the city in 1824; and it was in his parlor that the general held one of his receptions. Mr. Gregory moved in a life that was as regular as the succession of the seasons. He annually made a visit to the place of his birth, and as there were no rail roads in those days, he usually went with carriage, driver, daughter and grand-children. At the age of eighty-seven he was still erect, active, sprightly, fashionably dressed, but his thoughts never moved out of a prescribed circle, nor did his life deviate from certain fixed habits. He rose early and went to the barber's before breakfast. His ambition was to get there before Dr. Peter Wendell. However



# E A G L E

BY  
*W. G. Gregory*

Court Street ALBANY

Printed from Mr. Gregory's copperplate. This edifice was burnt in the great fire of 1848.



open to good company alone. I need not say that it was well filled: it was, at least half the year, redundantly full. All travelers of any note or con-

cold, slippery or stormy, it was indispensable to go to the barber's and *walk a mile before breakfast*. And although he merely went around the block, he seemed mentally to enjoy his full mile. If he rode it was always at eleven; and if accompanied by guests, his direction was invariably Cohoes and Waterford, and he arrived home to dine at three. He had a habit of going to the roof to examine the gutters, and could not be persuaded that it was unsafe for a man of his years to venture in such places. He insisted that he had never fallen there in all his life; and although his friends expected that he would come tumbling down, it seemed to be no part of his plan. At 12 o'clock noon, he took gin and water with a cracker, and drank wine with his dinner. In the evening he dosed in his chair, or walked the floor. He would persist that he never slept in the day time, although he might have just waked from a clever slumber in his chair. He uniformly retired when the clock struck ten, and if the young people wished to get him to bed earlier, it could only be done by setting the clock forward. He as persistently declared that he had not been angry in thirty years, although an attempt to correct him on this point led to a demonstration of the fallacy of his memory. He attended church as methodically and exactly as he did everything else. During the sessions of the legislature he went frequently to the senate, and was always honored with a seat within the bar. He attended with great regularity the meetings of the board of directors of the Bank of Albany, of which he was long a member. He attended to his own business exclusively to the close of his life, and never extended any confidence in relation to his finances. Mr. Gregory was approaching the close of his ninety-first year when his vigor suddenly waned, and he expired on the 4th of June, 1848. A full length portrait of him hangs in the Orphan asylum, an institution which he befriended in his will. He had two children, both of whom he survived. His son never married. His daughter was the wife of Dr. Joel A. Wing; she died in 1837. His grandson, Matthew Gregory Wing, was graduated at Yale in 1847, resided several years in Europe, and died at Santa Fé, New Mexico, 5th July, 1860, aged 34.

sequence ; all foreigners of distinction ; in one word all *gentlemen* put up at the Tontine.<sup>1</sup> For a period of some ten or twelve years, Mr. Gregory had no competition, no rival house to contend with ; and

<sup>1</sup>In July, 1792, a meeting of citizens was held for the purpose of organizing a company for the purpose of erecting a commodious public house. The plan of a constitution was drawn up, under which the company was to take the name of the Albany Hotel-Tontine Company, the capital of which was fixed at \$15,000, divided into 1,000 shares. The price of the lot was fixed at \$3,000 ; the cost of the building, at \$10,000 ; outhouses, \$1,000 ; furniture, \$1,000. The plan was thought to be "a happy invention to secure 'an advantageous property to children who may arrive to years of discretion.'" Individuals were entreated by the Gazette not to monopolize more than ten shares ! This scheme seems to have failed at this time, but was resumed a few years later, and resulted in the erection of the building, now numbered 51 and 53 State street. It seems to have been completed in 1798, and first occupied by Ananias Platt, who had previously kept a public house in Lansingburgh, and was the pioneer of the stage proprietors between Albany, Troy and Lansingburgh. In May, 1801, it came into the hands of Mr. Gregory, who issued the following advertisement :

*"Tontine Coffee House.*—Mat. Gregory, from the village of Waterford, has taken the Tontine Coffee House, State street, in the city of Albany. He has also provided himself with a large yard, stable, &c., for horses and carriages, for convenience of the gentleman traveler. The house has been kept for three years past by Mr. Ananias Platt, and will be open and ready to wait on those who may be pleased to call on him, the 15th inst. Every attention in his line of business shall be strictly attended to, by the public's humble servant.

MAT. GREGORY."

This house is alluded to by Mr. John Lambert, an English traveler, who visited Albany in 1807, who speaks also of the dietetic customs of the day. "We had excellent accommodations at Gregory's, which is equal to many of our hotels in London. It is the custom in all the American taverns, from the highest to the

was therefore compelled, I do not say *reluctantly*, to make a fortune !

Manners, 'tis said, change with customs ; and customs, we all know, change sometimes for the worse. I have seen something of public houses

lowest, to have a sort of *table d'hôte*, or public table, at which the inmates of the house and travelers dine together at a certain hour. It is also frequented by many single gentlemen belonging to the town. At Gregory's upwards of thirty sat down to dinner, though there were not more than a dozen who resided in the house. A stranger is thus soon introduced to an acquaintance with the people, and if he is traveling alone he will find at these tables some relief from the ennui of his situation. At the better sort of American taverns or hotels, very excellent dinners are provided, consisting of almost every thing in season. The hour is from two to three o'clock, and there are three meals in the day. They breakfast at eight o'clock upon rump steaks, fish, eggs, and a variety of cakes, with tea or coffee. The last meal is at seven in the evening, and consists of as substantial fare as the breakfast, with the addition of cold fowl, ham, &c. The price of boarding at these houses is from a dollar and a half to two dollars per day. Brandy, Hollands, and other spirits, are allowed at dinner ; but every other liquor is paid for extra. English breakfasts and teas, generally speaking, are meagre repasts compared with those of America ; and as far as I had an opportunity of observing, the people live, with respect to eating, in a much more luxurious manner than we do, particularly in the great towns and their neighborhoods. But their meals, I think, are composed of too great a variety, and of too many things, to be conducive to health ; and I have little doubt but that many of their diseases are engendered by gross diet, and the use of animal food at every meal. Many private families live nearly in the same style as at these houses, and have as great variety upon their tables. Formerly, pies, puddings, and cider used to grace the breakfast table : but they are now discarded from the genteeler houses, and are found only at the small taverns and farm houses in the country."

and hotels since Mr. Gregory's day, and am forced to acknowledge, that on the score of gentlemanly habits, politeness, and courtesy among their guests, and in reference also to the civility of their keepers and waiters, the present bears no comparison with the past. The inmates of the best hotels of the present day, are as varied in their aspects, habits and character, as were the motley herd that took lodgings in the ark; while of their keepers and waiters, the best that can be said, is, that they are in keeping with the character of their company. An occasional exception does but strengthen the rule.

It was at the Tontine that I became acquainted with many of the leading politicians and distinguished men of the state. It was there I first saw De Witt Clinton, Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, Doctor Mason, Morgan Lewis, Daniel D. Tompkins, John Armstrong, Chancellor Livingston, and many others. It was while there, I had the opportunity and the pleasure of examining, leisurely, and with a critical eye, that lightest twig of the great Corsican tree, Mr. Jerome Buonaparte; and of observing the fine form, the careless, abandoned air, and soldierly aspect of the celebrated Moreau, the rival at once of Xenophon and Napoleon. The Tontine was,



indeed, for several years, my local observatory, from which I watched the transit of the political planets, and noted the restless movements of the wandering stars. It was in fact, the best school-house I ever entered, and the only one, I am sorry to say, in which I ever took much delight.

I cannot resist the temptation (though I know I shall make nothing of it) to relate a ludicrous circumstance which took place at the Tontine, in the summer of 1804. I am well aware that many a good joke has been spoiled, and many a *laughable* incident rendered *grave*, by an attempt to put them on paper. 'Tis useless, said Doctor Johnson, to print Quin's jokes, unless you print his face with them. Nevertheless, I shall venture to relate the circumstance to which I have referred. I shall call it

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### THE STORY OF MONSIEUR GARROT.

Among the many foreigners at the Tontine in the traveling season of 1804, was a French gentleman by the name of Garrot, apparently about twenty-five or thirty years of age; remarkable for the simplicity of his manners, for his taste in music, and for his inability to speak a word of English. His personal appearance was greatly in his favor;

being stout, well made, and of a most agreeable countenance. Sitting near him at table, and speaking a little French, I soon became acquainted with him. He was as I found a German by birth, born in Frankfort, but a resident of Nantes. He remained several months in the city, was flush of money, and liberal, not to say profuse, in his expenditures.

His object, if indeed he had any, was to obtain information as to the form and character of our government; the institutions and condition of the country; its extent, population, trade; commerce, agricultural products, arts, manufactures, &c., &c. Of all the travelers I had ever met with, he was the most inquisitive. He asked ten thousand questions about things of which I knew nothing, or next to nothing — questions, some of which would have puzzled Chief Justice Marshall, Mr. Madison, Mr. Clay, or Mr. Anybody Else, save John Quincy Adams, to have answered off-hand. But as I perceived he entertained a high opinion of my abilities, I had not the heart, nor was it indeed my business, to undeceive him. I was ashamed to confess ignorance upon *any point*, and therefore gave him prompt and specific answers to each and every question let it relate to what it might: but the mischief of it was they were all taken for gospel, and immediately noted down in his tablets.

I could not but laugh at the idea. It was, perhaps, *unfair* on my part, but the *fault* was *his*. To suppose a young man of twenty-two or three, of sufficient authority for the history and statistics of an empire, was absurd. He should have known better. Many a book, however, has been written upon information of an inferior quality to that which I furnished Mons. Garrot, and from a less rational, not to say reliable source. It was through the priests and poets of Egypt and Assyria, that Herodotus obtained the materials for his famous history; and who thinks the less of his history on that account? The credulity and child-like simplicity of the author, together with the traditional and poetical character of its testimony, constitute, in fact, its greatest attractions.

But Monsieur Garrot, no doubt, congratulated himself upon his good fortune in finding a person so full of information, and so ready to impart it. On the other side, I did the best I could, under the circumstances. I studied day and night to prepare myself for Monsieur Garrot's questions; and if monsieur published his book, I flattered myself that it would be found in the truth of its statements and the *accuracy of its details*, at least equal to the history of Herodotus, or the travels of Basil Hall!

But this has nothing to do with the *circumstance* which it was my intention to narrate. It may serve, however, as a preface to the story, which runs thus :

Monsieur Garrot and myself, after a long walk one *Sunday* afternoon, returned to the Tontine about six o'clock. The weather was extremely hot ; and as the private parlors below were filled with strangers, I accompanied Mons. Garrot to his own chamber, where, complaining of the heat, he threw off his coat, and, somewhat to my surprise, continued the operation of stripping, until he came to the last article, over which, however, he threw a light silk morning gown — light, indeed, as gossamer ; this he tied loosely at the neck, and then sticking his toes into a pair of yellow slippers, began walking backward and forward between the window and door, both of which were thrown open to admit the air. The window looked into the street ; the door opened into a wide hall, with dormitories on either side. While thus cooling himself in the breeze, which swept his loose drapery from side to side, he suddenly turned to me and inquired whether I was fond of *music*. I answered, of course, in the affirmative. When, without further ceremony, he opened a long case filled with musical instru-

ments of various kinds, and asked me which I preferred. I could hardly believe it possible that he really meant to exercise his musical talents on that day of the week; but being a little curious, and, I must confess, a little mischievous at the same time, I pointed to the *violin*, which he immediately took out, and began to twang and tune. The discharge of a twelve pounder in the hall would not have set the house in greater commotion. The first scrape of the bow brought half a dozen chambermaids to the door; who catching sight of Monsieur's bare legs, ran down stairs, and reported that there was a Frenchman fiddling in the chambers, *stark naked!* By this time, my friend Garrot had got fairly a-going; and, with his head inclined to one shoulder, and his eye turned upwards, stalked up and down the room, fiddling as if the devil, together with Apollo and the whole nine, were in him. The figure he cut was so ridiculous, that I thought I should have died in the effort to suppress my laughter.

In less than five minutes from the time he began, it appeared to me that not less than five hundred heads had passed the door, each one catching something more than a glimpse of Monsieur's fine form. The wind seemed to increase with the music, and the stride of the performer became more lofty and ma-

jestic. At every turn the morning gown filled and swelled with the breeze—now waving and flapping in the cross current, and now extending out, as it were, upon a taught bowline. The hall was literally crowded with spectators, and the several questions, Who is he? Where did he come from? Is he mad? were whispered in rapid succession. But Mons. Garrot saw nothing but the ceiling of his room—heard nothing but the clarion voice of his own fiddle.

I was amazed at his abstraction—at his enthusiasm; and yet found it difficult to prevent myself from laughing aloud. He fiddled with such force and energy, that his elbow seemed to move like a whipsaw driven by steam. I had no idea that 'twas in the power of a single instrument to produce such a tumult of sounds.

The *Battle of Prague*, roared from ten “forty piazzas” (as Johnny Robison<sup>1</sup> used to call them) would be a mere tinkling, compared with this *uproar* of Mons. Garrot’s fiddle. I could not but confess, that in variety, force and compass, he surpassed

<sup>1</sup> John Robison owned the site now called the Museum Building, corner of State street and Broadway. This store was a two story brick building fronting cornerwise upon the two streets, having a hipped roof. The owner is remembered principally for his jokes. His name appears on the list of *freedom*s, as they were termed, admitting a settler to the privileges of citizenship, purchased in 1781, at £3 12s. He died 22d August, 1837, and was buried from

even my old friend Mr. Giles. This is no light compliment. A greater, indeed, could not in sincerity be paid to the most celebrated performer.

But Mr. Gregory, at length, made his appearance, and as he worked his way through the crowd at the door, I could perceive that he was not only angry but a little frightened. He was about to speak to Mons. Garrot, but monsieur was too much engaged to take the least notice of him; he therefore addressed himself to me, and said — “For God’s sake, Mr. Jones, what is the meaning of all this?” I was so full of laughter that I could not speak, and of course said nothing. He then turned to Mons. Garrot, and raised his hand as a sign for him to stop. Now, Mr. Gregory had no more the appearance of an innkeeper than he had of an emperor. It was natural, therefore, that the Frenchman should consider him as an intruder, and order him out of the room; which he did. But it was in French, which he perceived Mr. Gregory did not understand. He therefore collected all the English he was master of, and exclaimed, in an offended tone,

his residence No. 34 Dean street. He owned a garden situated upon the great hill that formerly stood where the First Presbyterian Church now stands, known as Robison’s hill, which the city fathers were for some time puzzled how to dispose of, and one use proposed was to enclose it and erect a monument to Clinton upon it. But it was pulled down, and served to fill a portion of the great pasture below Lydius street.

“Vat you vant?” Mr. Gregory was about to reply, when monseieur, waving his hand, cried, “Go vay! go vay!” and thereupon commenced fiddling fiercer than ever. This produced a universal burst of laughter; and so loud and long was the peal, (in which I was compelled to join), that monsieur paused, and seemed now, for the first time, to be sensible that there was an unusual collection in the hall, and that something was wrong somewhere.

The scene at this moment was picturesque in the highest degree. There stood Mons. Garrot, in the middle of the room, with his fiddle in his hand; his pantaloons hanging upon a chair, and his morning gown floating behind him; looking first at Mr. Gregory, then at me, then at the cluster of heads at the door, utterly at a loss to know what it all meant. There stood Mr. Gregory, too, in his neat drab-colored coat and Sunday inexpressibles, the very impersonation of order, decency and decorum, looking at the brawny, half naked Frenchman, with wonder and surprise. There, too, was the crowd of curious faces, male and female, peering in at the hall door; exhibiting every variety of expression, from the most serious to the most comic; all staring in profound silence, at the Frenchman and his fiddle. It was ridiculous enough; and had it continued a moment longer, it would have been



discreditable too. At my suggestion Mr. Gregory left the room. I then closed the door, and endeavored to explain to Mons. Garrot the cause of the collection in the hall, and the motives of the individual who had interrupted him. But I found it difficult to make him comprehend it, for I was not a little puzzled myself to shape the matter in such a way as to render the explanation *satisfactory*, as well as plausible. At length he *seemed* to understand it; and taking out his tablets, wrote down what I suppose he considered *the substance of my explanation*, and then handed it to me to read. It ran thus:—"Americans have very little taste for music, and never listen with pleasure to the violin on Sundays, *except in church!*"

'Tis very well, said I, monsieur; 'tis very well.

Half an hour afterwards, we walked deliberately down stairs, and took our seats at the tea table, as carelessly and as composedly, as if nothing had happened. But I observed, what Mons. Garrot probably did not, that every eye in the room was occasionally turned upon him. Though in one sense the author of the mischief, and certainly the most censurable of the two, yet I received the thanks of Mr. Gregory, for having put an end to the confusion occasioned by the musical taste of Mons. Garrot.

In looking back to the period of 1801, nothing impresses itself upon my mind more forcibly, than the degeneracy of the race of great men. What a difference between the leading politicians of that day and this: between Thomas Jefferson for instance, and John Tyler! If we continue to go down hill at this rate, where, I would ask, shall we be likely to find ourselves at the end of the next half century?

But this is leading us off the track: let us go back to the Tontine. It is near the breakfast hour, and the city boarders, I perceive, are already dropping in. That well-dressed, handsome-faced gentleman standing upon the stoop, with his hat under his arm and a rattan in his hand, is Mr. James Kane, of whom you have heard me speak so frequently. The tall, spare man, with whom he is conversing, is Mr. Walter Clark,<sup>1</sup> a merchant of the city, plain and simple in his character and manner, but polite and gentlemanly. The person that has just joined them, is an exceedingly clever man in his way — a

<sup>1</sup> WALTER CLARK came from Newport, R. I., and was engaged in the grocery business adjoining the Albany Bank building, in what was known as Little-state street. He retired from business in 1828, and resided some years later in Columbia street. He died in Brooklyn, N. Y., 10th Nov. 1841, aged 63, and lies buried with his parents and some other members of his family, in the Bath burial ground. Mr. William Mitchell was for many years his clerk. He was a bachelor.

little self-complacent, perhaps, but a gentleman and a wit: the latter he inherited, among other goods and chattels, from his father, who had a great deal more, by the bye, than he bequeathed to any one. He is, as you perceive, extremely civil and polite; but it is rather because he deems it due to himself, than to others. His wit, though perfectly good-natured, is not scattered at random. It has its mark and is always intended to tell. But notwithstanding this piquancy, and self appreciation, he is a clever companion, particularly over a bottle of good madeira. His fine rosy face shows this. In short, among the gentlemen of the Tontine, Mr. Caldwell<sup>1</sup> holds no second rank.

That young man standing in the centre of the group on the left, is a Mr. —, somewhat remarkable for his flow of spirits and fluency of speech. He has acquired some reputation in the city, as a *business* man, and is quite a favorite with Mr. Kane. He is said to be something of a reader too, and, by the aid of a retentive memory, sustains himself in the midst of a class of young men, much better edu-

<sup>1</sup> WILLIAM CALDWELL was the son of James Caldwell, an eminent Albany merchant, who died in 1829, aged 83. The son succeeded to his father's business in 1802 in the building now No. 58 State street, where he continued to sell groceries, doing up sugar and tea with his own hands, and retired in 1821, a wealthy bachelor. He resided principally at Caldwell, on Lake George, where he had a large estate, and died in Albany, 1st April, 1848, aged 72.

cated than himself. He has a disposition to satire, which he frequently indulges at the expense of others, but without any taint of malignity. In his open and somewhat random mode of talking, he certainly says some things, and tells some truths, which it would be difficult for any person to utter without giving offence. He has the advantage, too, of being older, if not abler, than he looks; and, under the guise of a frank and heedless manner, is keenly observant of the conduct and character of those around him. I have no doubt that he has, at this moment, in his portfolio, a full length portrait, not only of many of his personal friends and acquaintances, but of most of the distinguished men of the state. But he is no scholar and cannot give to his sketches an abiding interest.

That plain but gentlemanly looking man, now talking with Mr. Kane is Mr. Sedgwick,<sup>1</sup> a member of the bar, and one of the most promising young men in the city. His character may be read in his countenance: in which, I think, you may also read that he is from Massachusetts. He brings with him the advantages of family reputation, character, and

<sup>1</sup>THEODORE SEDGWICK died at Pittsfield, Mass., of apoplexy, while attending a political meeting, 7th Nov., 1839, aged 60. He was the eldest son of Judge Sedgwick, a distinguished statesman of Massachusetts, was graduated at Yale college in 1798, and resided in Albany until about 1821, when he removed to Stockbridge, Mass.

talents; and sustains these antecedents by personal merit, purity of mind and cleverness of manner. He is the professional partner of Mr. Harmanus Bleecker,<sup>1</sup> a gentleman of sterling merit, and withal the best *Dutch scholar* in the city.

By the bye — but let us walk on — it has often occurred to me, that next to the good fortune of being born *white*, or, in other words, of *not* being born a squalid Esquimaux on the frozen coast of Labrador, nor yet a woolly-pated negro, in the burning wilds of Senegambia — next, I repeat, to this good fortune, is that of having been born in a Christian country, and of a *good family*. He that does not appreciate his escape from the wretched condition of savage life or slavish negroism, and is not impressed with the advantages of Christian nativity and family distinction, has no sense of indebtedness to providence, or no feeling of gratitude in him. In using the term *good family*, I have no reference to wealth; for wealth, as we all know, is not only within the reach, but often in the possession of the meanest of mankind. A good family, in the ordinary sense of the phrase, is a family of good character, distinguished for talent or patriotism, or at

<sup>1</sup> HARMANUS BLEECKER was a descendant of the celebrated Jan Jansen Bleecker; was born 9th Oct., 1779; married late in life, while minister at the Hague, Sebastiana Cornelia Mentz, of Holland; he died 19th July, 1849, aged 70. (*See Annals of Albany*, I, 276).

least free from the touch or taint of dishonor. By way of illustration, permit me to say, that had my ancestors, upon either side, been tories of the revolution, I should never have ventured to boast of my descent from a good family: on the contrary, I should have considered the toryism as a stain upon the family escutcheon, which it would require the patriotism of at least two generations to wipe out. But this, you will say, is a compound of pride and prejudice. It may be so; but the pride is of that species which has some dignity in it, and the prejudice is of that family of the plant which is worth cultivating.

PRIDE, my dear madam, is a more powerful passion of the mind than AMBITION itself. The one may lead us to seek the bubble reputation, even in the cannon's mouth; but the other crosses and controls the vicious impulses of our nature, steps in between the tempter and the crime, holds back the hand from the forbidden fruit, and balks the devil in his efforts to corrupt us. Though in no degree allied to morality or principle, yet it often operates in conjunction with them, and not unfrequently supplies their total absence. It must be remembered that we are not all armed alike; and in this warfare with evil, it becomes us to make use of such arms as we possess.

But this is a digression — let us go back to our reminiscences.

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### THE MARQUIS DU BARRAILLE.

Among other waifs upon the common of life, with which I came in contact in those days, was an old and veritable French marquis, by the name of Du Barraille. He was one of those unfortunate loyalists who were driven into exile by the French revolution. He held the commission and rank of colonel in the king's guards, and had fled his country with nothing but loyalty in his head and nothing but the order of St. Louis in his pocket. He had wandered through the West India islands, thence through the Canadas, and finally found his way through Lake Champlain and the head waters of the Hudson, down to Albany. By this time, his resources were completely exhausted, every trinket had been put in requisition — his gold snuff box, his diamond ring, even his sword, as he said, had been pledged to the brokers or pawned to the Jews. The cross of St. Louis he had received from the hand of his royal master, and therefore could not part with it without dishonor. While in the West Indies, he had, probably with a view to mend his fortunes, married the daughter of a wealthy planter; but owing to some eruption or revolution, the for-

tune was lost, and nothing remained on his arrival at Albany, save the aforesaid cross of St. Louis, madame, and two children ! The marquis was an educated, well bred, and gentlemanly man ; familiar with English literature, and spoke the language sufficiently well. Madame could boast of none of these advantages. She was bred upon a plantation, and spoke no language but the creole. Yet she was a respectable and kind-hearted woman.

On ascertaining the character and circumstances of the marquis, the young gentlemen of the city came to his rescue. 'Twas evident that his only recourse was to open a school and teach the French language: this they advised ; and to enable him to carry it into execution hired a house, furnished it themselves, put him into it, and some eight or ten of them entered their names as pupils of the marquis and boarders at the Hotel Du Barraille. But with the exception of one or two, the study of the French language formed no part of their amusements. The principal object of the move, was to keep the marquis from starving, and in doing which they came pretty near starving themselves ; for the marquis had never been in the commissary department, and was rather an awkward sort of landlord. They stood it, however, about six months, and then broke up, paid the rent and tuition for the year,



and returned to the Tontine, from whence they came, with as little *parlevous* in them as they had when they left it. Those six months, however, were by no means thrown away. They were, in fact, the most memorable in the annals of their lives: never before, were there so many events and circumstances, so much fun and frolic, so much poetry, music and eloquence, crowded into such a narrow space of time. Every language was studied in the school but the French, and every art was practised in the kitchen but the art of cooking. If that which was contemplated was never done, much certainly was done that was never contemplated. But with all their whims and irregularities, the old marquis was proud of his pupils, and fond of their company; though he preferred claret, he had no particular antipathy to a glass of madeira. We had, of course, the history of the revolution over and over, with anecdotes of distinguished characters, civil and military. But what amused us most, was the gravity with which the old loyalist would talk of the restoration of the Bourbons. He spoke of it as though it was a matter of course, waiting only the destined hour. And all this too, at the very time when Napoleon was master of more than half of Europe; when thrones, and crowns, and principalities, and powers, were made and unmade by a dash of his pen, or the word of his mouth.

We laughed in our sleeves at what we considered the old man's folly: and the "restoration of the Bourbons," became a jest and a bye word. And yet, "tell it not in Gath," the Bourbons were restored, and the old marquis, as he always believed he should, returned to France? But, before that joyous hour had arrived, his resources were exhausted and his fortunes had fallen to their lowest ebb. The greater part of his scholars had never entered his school room, and had now ceased to pay. The Hotel Du Barraille was of course abandoned, and he rented a small house in a cheap and dirty street in the purlieus of Fox creek.<sup>1</sup>

Thither I followed him. For, amid the fun and frolic of the first six months, I had barely learned to read and translate the language. I now proposed to learn, if possible, to speak it: since I was now the only pupil, and the only boarder. The house was a wretched tenement; and the fare, I knew, would be still worse. My bill of board and tuition was his only means of support. But madame was an able economist; and one piece of meat,

<sup>1</sup> *Vossen kil* in Dutch; Foxes creek in English. Always written and spoken in the plural it came to be frequently called *Foxen creek*. The vernacular having gone to ruin, the old names were horribly Englished; and the creek is lost likewise, being completely built over, and scarcely known to this generation, although once a notable stream, abounding with salmon even. Fox street, whose name pointed out its locality, has been changed to Canal street, and all the poetry, ever inspired by its surroundings, is in oblivion buried.

generally, carried us through the week. The fare was arranged as follows: On *Monday*, we had the rib or joint, roasted; *Tuesday*, the remains of Monday were served up nearly as good as new; *Wednesday*, the fragments were converted into a most palatable hash; *Thursday*, the hash was warmed over; *Friday*, the bones furnished a rich soup; *Saturday*, the soup was warmed over; and on *Sunday*, — I dined out — and the family had, what madame called, a picked up dinner, as she was religiously opposed to cooking much on that day.

The breakfast, in the natural order of things, should have been mentioned first. It consisted of coffee made of parched peas or oats, stale baker's bread, and one small Scotch herring for each person. The herring was the life and soul of the meal. How often did I wish it had pleased the marchioness or the gods, to have allowed us *two* instead of *one*. But each made the most of the one he had. I used to begin at one end of mine (it was immaterial which), and grind it to powder, swallowing every particle, head and tail, bones, fins, gills, and gizzard! Not one atom was left to tell the story that a herring had ever touched my plate. No indigestion followed: no one while boarding with the marquis, was ever troubled with dyspepsy!

The tea was a dish of hot water colored with

brown sugar, and a crust of dry bread without butter. Yet I never heard a complaint. On the contrary, I often complimented madame, myself, upon the richness of her coffee, and the fine flavor of her tea! Never, I believe, since the expulsion of Adam from the Garden of Eden—never, I am certain, since the children of Israel fed upon manna in the wilderness, did a family live at so little expense, and at the same time make so respectable a show.

The old marquis himself, though his whole wardrobe would not have sold for five shillings, appeared to be dressed in the style of a French nobleman, so well did any thing and every thing become him. Kate, a very pretty American girl not over sixteen years of age, was his cook and laundress, his steward, butler, barber, chambermaid and footman! A single room, of about twelve by sixteen, served the whole family, myself excepted, for a kitchen, sitting-room, wash-room and bed-room. Yes, in that room of all rooms, in which the washing, cooking and dressing was done, slept the marquis, madame, two children, Kate and Cæsar! Cæsar, by the bye, was the marquis's dog; and a more loyal brute never lived. Like the marquis, he had the *politesse*, the air and dignity of the ancient *régime*. The marchioness never dined with the family, except

on Sunday, when there was no company, and nothing to eat: but at breakfast and at tea, she made her appearance in a style that would have astonished the mother of mankind. The marquis, too, always came forth, fresh as a bridegroom; his boots neatly polished, his hair powdered, his coat brushed and buttoned, and his hat under his arm, both (marquis and hat) looking as good as new. Knowing, as I could not but know, the character and condition of the apartment from which they issued, it was difficult to conceive by what means such neatness and elegance of appearance could be so suddenly produced. On questioning Kate about the matter, she confessed that 'twas the work of her own hands: that she polished the boots with the end of a candle; and that the powder with which she dusted the marquis's head, was nothing but Indian meal; that she brushed the coat, rubbed the buttons, and fixed the cravat; and then adjusted the ruffles of madame. But enough of this.

I continued to reside in the family for more than six months, in despite of the unpleasant location, the wretched apartments and meagre fare. The thin oat coffee and spare diet, however, were favorable to the studies I pursued; and I therefore particularly recommend them to those who wish to acquire a just knowledge of human nature, or a correct pronunciation of the French language.

## THE LAST NIGHT.

I now present the reader with the history of the last night I passed under the roof of the old marquis, in this his last place of residence in the city of Albany.

It was late in the evening before I left the marquis's little room below, and retired to my own. I had been listening, as usual, to the tales of the revolution, and the sufferings of the emigrants, and felt no disposition to sleep. The day had been extremely hot, and the air was close and sultry. On opening my window, I perceived that a thunderstorm was gathering in the west, and concluded to sit up till 'twas over. In the meantime I amused myself by translating passages from the *Henriad*, and trying my hand at turning them into English verse. While thus engaged, I was startled by an unusual noise and agitation below. I could distinctly hear the voice of the marquis, and the hasty tread of feet passing from one room to another. I was aware that the youngest child, a boy about four years of age, had been unwell for some time; but as no idea had been entertained that he was in any immediate danger, I concluded that some accident had happened, or that some disturbance had taken place in

the street. But in less than a minute came a shriek from the marchioness, accompanied by the terrifying exclamation of "Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu !" I seized the light, and placing it at the head of the stairs, hurried down. The doors were all open ; and on entering the room, I was shocked at the spectacle it presented. There was madame with her clothes half torn off her back — still raving and tearing the hair from her head. The old marquis was walking about the room, half distracted, wringing his hands, and ejaculating "Mon pauvre Louis ! Mon pauvre Louis !" Poor Kate sat by the cradle, crying and sobbing as if her heart would break. I said a few words to the marquis, and endeavored to express my sympathy to madame ; but words were vain, and sympathy, though recognized, was unavailing. I walked fearfully to the cradle. It was too true : all was over ; the child had breathed its last. Its look was awful. It lay almost entirely naked, with its eyes unclosed. After gazing upon it for a few moments, I turned to leave the room, for the scene was too painful to bear. At that moment there came a flash of lightning, followed by a clap of thunder, which shook the house to its very foundation. Kate turned pale. The words "Mon Dieu !" were repeated in a fearful tone by more than one voice. Even old Cæsar crawled out from under

the table, and seating himself upon his hind legs pointed his nose up into the air, and gave one of the most prolonged and mournful howls that I had ever heard. It was with the greatest difficulty that I could keep my nerves steady. I would have given a kingdom, if I had one, to have been ten miles off. I, however, left the room slowly, and had but just regained my chamber, when a large cat, with eyes as big as saucers, poked her head into the room, and looking me wildly in the face, gave one of the most infernal *yowls* that was ever heard by mortal ears! Where the devil she came from, nobody knew. This brought old Cæsar out again, and another howl was set up: another flash of lightning, and another peal of thunder followed, Father Abraham! said I. But my imagination was getting wild. I began to look upon it as the last night, or as the foreshadowing type of the last day! Gradually, however, the Heavens became more quiet, and the sounds of woe less and less audible. At length the morning broke: the sun came forth in the east; and the world was again radiant with light, and life, and beauty.

I gave Kate some necessary instructions, and leaving the house buried in profound repose, walked deliberately down to the Tontine: not exactly, however, in that mood of mind in which Adam



left the gates of paradise; nor with the lingering step and backward look with which Lot's wife left the rich city that adorned the fruitful plain of the Pentapolis, but with the returning buoyancy of one whose spirits had been depressed by a gloomy tempest and a night of horrors.

A few years afterwards I received a letter from the old marquis, dated in PARIS. But his long cherished dream of restoration to rank, friends and fortune, was never realized. The revolution had engulphed all but the memory of the past, and he literally found himself a stranger in the land of his birth.

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Some people seem to imagine that all mankind are alike. They see no difference,—and by way of proof that there is none, they will tell you that every individual of the species (unless he has lived in Mississippi) has two eyes: and unless he has been in the wars, or on a rail road, has two arms and two legs. Beyond these fixtures and appendages they never look, never inquire. They note no discrepancies, no peculiarities, no quips of the imagination, no crotchets of the mind; and they actually go through life without ever seeing any thing remarkable.

Others again, though fewer in number, are for-

ever on the lookout for novelties and diversities,—for the odd, the eccentric, the ludicrous ; and are singularly successful in discovering singular forms and combinations — peculiar habits, looks, actions and traits of character. With *them*, no two things under heaven are alike — no two men bear any resemblance to each other, or to any body else.

To which of these two classes the writer of these reminiscences belongs, I leave to the reader to decide.

#### OLD MR. BANYAR.

Among other curious subjects that attracted my attention during the early part of my residence in Albany, was a blind old man led about the streets by his colored servant. It was Goldsborough Banyar, a most intelligent, wealthy and respectable old gentleman. He was the most perfect type of the *Anglo-American* then living. He was the last of a race, or class of men, now totally extinct — a race, born in England, grown rich in America, proud of their birth, and prouder of their fortune.

He had been a secretary of state under the colonial government, and at the breaking out of the war of the revolution, very naturally, and the prospect considered, very wisely, took sides (but not arms) with the mother country. He was a royalist in feeling, and doubtless in principle — the *feeling*, it is

believed, underwent no change; the *principle*, in the course of time, became temperately, and I may add, judiciously, modified by his interests. He had, while in his office of secretary, obtained from the crown many large and valuable tracts of land. These lands were the sources of his wealth. With the eye of intelligence, sharpened by the peculiarity of his position, he watched the course of events, and like a skilful pilot, steered between the extremes. He wisely kept a friend in either port, and had always an anchor out to windward. In short, he preserved his character from reproach, on the other side of the water, and *his lands from confiscation* on this. His mind kept pace with the intelligence of the age. He became an American when America became triumphant,—thought better of republicanism as it approximated to power; and finally, without abating one jot of his love for the land of his birth, came quietly into our political arena under the banner of Mr. Jefferson! In all this he acted, as we think, wisely and prudently. He was no American at the commencement of the war, but an Englishman, born and bred, with the badges of office and of confidence still in his possession. Yet he took no part—gave no aid, and but little comfort to the enemy, for when secretly applied to for advice, he sent by the messenger a basket of fruit—and when

for *information*, the return was a basket of eggs! He was therefore, no *tory*, but merely a judicious politician: in which character, if he acquired no *fame*, he at least preserved his reputation and his *property*, and merited the thanks of those remembered in his will.

He must have been somewhere about three score and ten years of age when I first saw him in the streets of Albany. He was a short, stout built man, English alike in form, in character, and in aspect: and at the period to which I refer, infirm, gouty, and and nearly blind; but still sound in mind and venerable in appearance. The colored servant by whom he was led, was no unimportant personage. He was his man Friday — his man Peter — his all in all — for without his aid locomotion was impossible. What was not a little remarkable, was the fact, that Peter resembled his master in almost every particular, save his gout and his blindness. He was of the same height and make, as well dressed, nearly as old, and quite as grey. He was, moreover, as independent, as important and as irritable. At a little distance, it was indeed difficult to tell which was master and which was man.

Nothing could be more amusing than their conversation and disputes when moving together, arm in arm, down Pearl street and across State, to Lewis's

tavern,<sup>1</sup>—a haunt, to which they resorted daily, whenever the weather would permit. It was indeed the haunt of a good many other distinguished individuals of those days. All the quid nuncs, news mongers, segar smokers, and back-gammon players, together with a long list of worthies, who were constitutionally thirsty between twelve and one o'clock, made Lewis's their head quarters. Could the old gentleman have seen all the company there assembled, listened to their language, and witnessed their libations at the bar, he would probably have relished their society something less than he did.

But, be that as it may—in his frequent peregrinations to and from that celebrated tavern, it was my special pleasure (boy like) to throw myself a few paces in his rear, and listen to the dialogue that was sure to take place between him and his man Peter. It was generally in a pretty sharp tone of voice, and almost always upon a disputacious key. In crossing State street one day, on their return from Lewis's, it commenced thus:—Peter, said the old man, you're leading me into the mud. There's no mud here, says Peter. But I say there is, retorted the old man fiercely. I say there aint, said

<sup>1</sup> Lewis's tavern was at this time either the corner of Washington, now South-pearl and State street, on the present site of 78 State street. Robert Lewis died June 17th, 1798, aged 73, and was succeeded by his son Stewart Lewis.

Peter. D—n it, sir, said the old man, giving his arm a twitch and coming to a full halt, don't you suppose I know the nature of the ground on which I stand? No, says Peter, don't spose you know any such thing; you ony stept one foot off the stones, that's all. Well, well, come along then; what do you keep me standing here in the street for? I don't keep you, said Peter; you keep yourself. Well, well, come along, said the old man, and let me know when I come to the gutter. You are in the gutter now, said Peter. The devil I am! said the old man; then pausing a moment, he added, in a sort of moralizing tone, there's a worse gutter than this to cross, I can tell you, Peter. If there be, said Peter, I should like to know where 'tis; I have seen continued Peter, every gutter in town, from the ferry stairs to the Patroon's, and there aint a worse one among 'em all. But the gutter I mean, said the old gentleman in a lower tone, is one which you *cross in a boat*, Peter. 'Tis strange, said Peter, that I should never have found it out;—now, lift your foot higher, or you'll hit the curb stone,—cross a gutter in a boat! ejaculated Peter, 'tis nonsense. 'Tis so written down, said the old man. *Written down*, said Peter; the newspapers may write what they please, but I don't believe a word on't. I'm thinking said the old man, they put too much

brandy in their toddy there at Lewis's. I thought so too, said Peter, when you were getting off the steps at the door; and since you've mentioned that boat, I'm sure of it. What is that you say? said the old man, coming to a halt again, and squaring himself round; you thought so, did you? what right had you to think any thing about it? I tell you, Peter, you are a fool!

The attitude and appearance of the parties at this moment was so whimsical—in fact, so ridiculous, that I could not restrain myself from laughing aloud. Who is that? said the old man, taking quietly hold of Peter's arm again. Don't know him, said Peter; suppose he's one of the *new comers*. New comers! said the old man, repeating the phrase. Is he old or young, Peter? Young, said Peter. Then *I forgive him*, said the old man; and after a short pause, added, in a lower tone of voice, *May he never know the misfortune of blindness, or the gout*. Never in the course of my life did I feel so ashamed of myself as at that moment. A blow from a cane could not have hurt me half as much. My first thought was to walk directly up to him, take him by the hand and make him an ample apology. But to entertain a just sense of what we ought to do, is one thing—to do it, quite another. In the present case, I was apprehensive that my apology

might not be accepted; besides, it was not at his infirmities I laughed, but at the singular oddity of the scene. I imagined, moreover, that Jeremiah himself, had he been present, would have laughed at the ridiculous dialogue and still more ridiculous attitudes of the parties.

It is impossible, I think, to reflect one moment upon the position which Mr. Banyar<sup>1</sup> occupied during the war of the revolution, and the manner in which he sustained himself in it, without conceding to him a thorough knowledge of the world, great sagacity and great address. It is said by those who knew him personally, that his manners were those of a gentleman, and that he possessed no ordinary share of talent and of wit.

Among other curious things that attracted my attention in the ancient city of Albany, just prior

<sup>1</sup> GOLDSBOROUGH BANYAR died 4th Nov., 1815, aged 91. He was born in England, but came to this country in early life, where he ever after resided. For many years prior to the revolution, he was deputy-secretary of the province, and as the secretary was absent, the important and laborious duties of that office were performed by Mr. Banyar in a manner highly honorable to his talents and integrity, and very advantageous to the province. Through his very long life he was considered a man of strict and unimpeachable integrity, punctual and faithful in the discharge of his public duties, and virtuous and amiable in the private relations of life — respected by his numerous acquaintance, and affectionately esteemed and beloved by his family and friends. His funeral took place at St. Peter's church, when a sermon was preached by the Rev. Timothy Clowes.



to the extinction of the Dutch dynasty, was the disproportionate number of old people. Pearl street in particular, was lined with these remnants of the olden days. The population of the city was evidently undergoing a thorough revolution. One whole generation — nay, one *whole race*, — was then on the very eve of passing away, while another, of an entirely different character and aspect was coming in. But the most attractive pictures to my eye, were the aged members of the retiring race.

Could Solomon have paid a visit to Albany in 1803 or 4, he would have acknowledged (notwithstanding his former assertion to the contrary), that there were many things “new under the sun.” He would, I think, have found something to admire as *new* and *original*, even in the antique though unclassic model of

#### OLD MR. LYDIUS.<sup>1</sup>

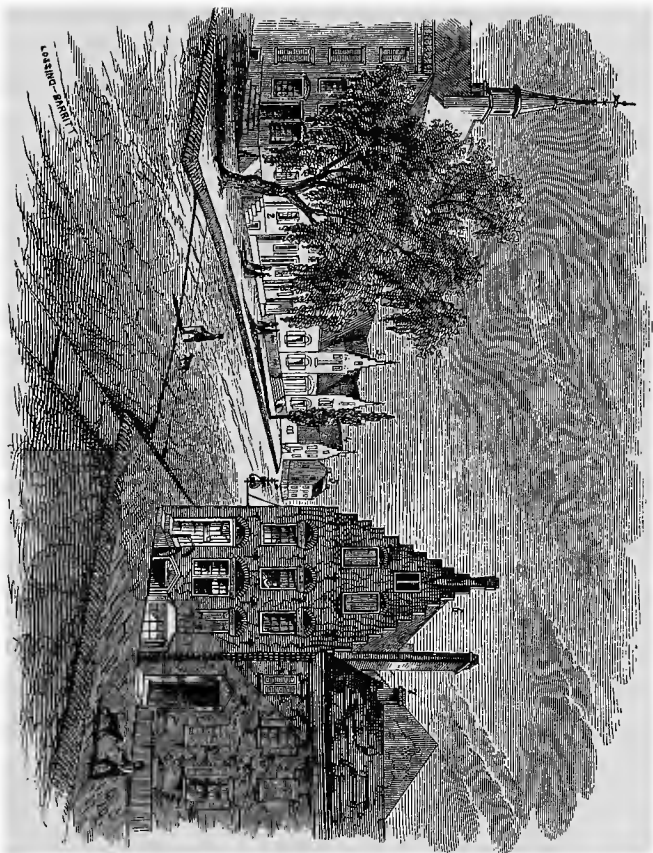
This old gentleman, if tradition may be relied on, was something of a lion in his day. He was unusually tall, raw-boned, and of a most forbidding aspect

<sup>1</sup> BALTHAZAR LYDIUS, familiarly known as *Balt Lydius*, was a very eccentric man. He died 17th Nov., 1815, aged 78, and was the last male descendant of his family. His tombstone is seen in the Episcopal burying-ground. His house is said to have been imported from Holland, bricks, wood-work, tiles, and ornamented irons, with which it was profusely adorned, expressly for the use of the Rev. Gideon Schaets, who came over in 1652. It is said

—singular in his habits, and eccentric in his character — but independent, honest, and gruff as a bear. He occupied, at the commencement of the present century, the old, and somewhat mysterious looking mansion, then standing at the south-east corner of North-pearl and State street: and was, of course, next door neighbor, in an easterly line, to the old elm tree. The house exhibited in its style and order the taste if not the pride of its proprietor. Its position admitted of *two* front gables, and two front gables it had; thus rivaling, if not excelling in architectural dignity, the celebrated mansion of the Van der Heyden family.<sup>1</sup> One front rested on Pearl, the other on State. Each had its full complement of *outside* decorative adjuncts — namely, long spouts from the eaves, little benches at the door, iron figures on the wall, and a rooster on the gable head. How the *inside* was contrived, nobody knew. The only inhabitants, or at least the only ones that my curiosity

that the materials arrived simultaneously with the pulpit and the old church bell, in 1657. It was supposed to have been the oldest brick building in North America at the time it was demolished in 1833, to make room for the present Apothecary's Hall. But there is also another version which attributes the building of the house to the Rev. John Lydius, the ancestor of Balthazar, who came over in 1703; and that only the timbers which came from Holland and were too short for the church, were used in the construction of this house.

<sup>1</sup> A genealogy of this family may be found in the second edition of Woodworth's *Reminiscences of Troy*, pp. 71-74.



### THE LYDIUS HOUSE.

Showing also the Elm Tree Corner, now the site of Tvedde Hall.  
6 Lydius House. 3 Vanderheyden Palace.



could ever discover, were the dark and indomitable proprietor, and an old, unmutilated, pale-faced, melancholy looking cat. Nor were these visible to any human eye except at particular hours, or under peculiar circumstances.

At the dusky hour of eve, or in the misty grey of the morning, the head, or what was taken to be the head, of the old man, was sometimes seen peering out of the narrow window in the southern front; while the low, complaining voice of the other inhabitant (when darkness covered the land) might be distinctly heard from the turret of the western wing. No door was ever seen to be open<sup>1</sup>— no twinkling light gave sign of life within. Even in the day time, its dreary aspect conjured up the idea of trap-doors and dungeons. At night I never passed it without quickening my pace and looking sharply about me. Yet from the tax gatherer I learned that Mr. Lydius was a man of property; and the corporation, as a testimonial of his virtues, caused his name to be painted on a little board and fastened up at the corner of a street in the southern

<sup>1</sup> The Pearl street door is said to have been used only for the egress of the dead. The orgies of a Dutch funeral are fast receding from the memory of the living. Few remain who have witnessed them. The records of the church show the expenses of the funerals of the church paupers two hundred years ago, in rum, beer, tobacco, pipes, &c. Videlicet Munsell's *Historical Collections of Albany*, i, 40.

section of the city."<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable that his shade is at this moment wandering along the sea-resounding dikes in the land of his ancestors — the once proud and heroic Holland!

### THE VISIT.

Nothing could have been more appropriate than the Christian name given to these reminiscences, since it authorizes the writer to go backward or forward, up or down, to the right or left, whichever way the capriciousness of memory may incline. It relieves him, moreover, from the necessity of observing the chronological order of events, or of paying indeed any sort of regard to *time*, other than to keep within the limits prescribed — namely — the first eight years of the nineteenth century.

Passing down North-pearl street, the next day after my arrival in the city, in company with my

<sup>1</sup> The street was named in honor of Rev. John Lydius, who preached here from 1700 to 1709. It was the camp ground of the British armies in the French and Indian wars. The ancient church pasture, which came into the possession of the Dutch church in 1668, was laid out into lots in 1791, and sold by auction. The streets were named after the *domines* or ministers of that church. Beginning with Lydius street on the north, then Westerlo, Bassett, Nucella and Johnson, running parallel with it. Among those running north and south were Dellius (pronounced Dalius, and now so written), from Rev. Godfrey Dell, who came over in 1683; Frelinghuysen, now Franklin, and Van Schee.

friend, Col. Elisha Jenkins (with whom I had been examining the topography, antiquities and architectural curiosities of the town), he proposed to call and see an old friend of his, whose name I have forgotten, but whose residence I remember was on the left hand side, two or three blocks from State street. It was to my eye at least, a queer looking mansion. It had all the venerable marks of age, and many of the emblems of Amsterdam stamped upon its face. On entering we were conducted by a colored female servant through a long, dark and narrow hall, into a dimly lighted room in the rear. The host struck me as somewhat typical of the mansion. He was an aged gentleman, with the fashions of other days sufficiently apparent in his dress and address. He was seated in a huge arm chair, with a red worsted cap on his head, a long, loose gown or robe, coming down to his ankles, silver buckles in his shoes, and one foot swathed in flannel resting upon a stool.

Though frank and courteous in his manner, there was yet an air of consequential dignity about him, and a tone of authority in his voice, which would have suited the character of Henry VIII. He would indeed have furnished an excellent subject for the pencil of Hans Holbein. The furred robe, the buckles and the red cap, would have made a figure in one of Hans's pictures.

There were several gentlemen in the room at the time of our entrance, and one or two more dropped in afterwards. The principal subject of conversation was politics, and I soon perceived they were all thorough going Jeffersonians. The recent triumph of their party had put them in high spirits. But I was particularly struck with the tone and manner of the old gentleman. I had never before witnessed so much freedom and hilarity tempered with so much courtesy. Being a mere lad at the time, I had, of course, remained silent. The old gentleman perceiving this turned to me and said, well my young friend, which side are you? I answered that I was not much of a politician, but had made up my mind to go with the majority. Ah ha, said he, older heads than yours have wisely made up their minds to pursue the same course. This I thought rather a hit at my friend Col. Jenkins, who had but recently joined the dominant party. The old man now turned to a tall, quiet sort of personage, who had taken no part in the conversation, and said in a loud but familiar tone, Peter, Peter, we are becoming rather dry, make us, I pray you, something to drink, Peter. Peter retired, and in a few minutes returned with a glass pitcher (or rather a sort of two quart tumbler with a handle to it), filled to the brim, which he handed to the old gentleman first, who had no



sooner taken a swallow of it than he called out, Ah, Peter, Peter, you have made this *pretty well to the north*, I can tell you ; but hand it round Peter, hand it round ; and round it went, each one taking a hearty pull at it. When it came to my turn, it did not pass untasted, for I was curious to know what it was made of ; so I took a tiff by way of gaining knowledge, as Eve took the apple. I found it a sort of spiced and sugared grog, or what I believe the learned in such matters would call *rum toddy*.

This was the first time I had ever seen a company of gentlemen drink out of the same cup. It was the first time, too, that I had ever heard the phrase of “too far to the north ” used as a substitute for the words *too strong*.

But I was in a new latitude, and almost every thing I heard or saw, was new to me. The old house, the dark and narrow hall, the singular appearance of the aged host, the red cap and silver buckles, the two quart tumbler, and even the *grog itself*, was new to me.

The whole scene was many years afterwards brought freshly to my mind by reading Halleck's song in praise of the beer and the bucktails of Tammany Hall.

I shall certainly be excused for inserting, as a fit-

ting close to this article, one stanza of that memorable *jeu d'esprit*.

"That beer and those Bucktails I'll never forget,  
But oft when alone and unnoticed by all,  
I think, is the porter cask foaming there yet?  
Are the Bucktails still swigging at Tammany Hall?"

### FRENCH POLITENESS.

In the course of one of our evening conversations the old marquis remarked that the English, as a nation, had no just notions of politeness: and this he attributed to the all-pervading influence of the mercantile and trading character of the people. The Americans, he said, though more civil than the English, imitated or adopted their forms and ceremonies. In France no *gentleman* addressed another with his hat on, whether in-doors or out. In America, as in England, you *touch the hat*, instead of *uncovering*, as true politeness dictates. This, said he, is never seen in France, except in the army, and even there the practice is confined to subalterns. But in cold and stormy weather, said I, inquiringly. 'Tis all the same, continued the marquis, politeness is a *code* by which we regulate our conduct, and has nothing to do with the weather. It takes no lessons from convenience. It cannot be changed or modified by any external circumstance. 'Tis very well, said I to myself, we shall see how the thing will

work. I shall avail myself of the first opportunity to test the theory of this polite code by reducing it to practice.

Not long after, in passing down State street in the midst of a violent snow storm, I saw at some distance ahead, the tall form of the old marquis, slowly approaching in a zig-zag line, — the snow driving so furiously in his face as to oblige him every now and then to tack and veer a little from his direct course, to enable him to take breath. Now, said I, is the time, and this the fitting occasion, to test the virtue of that polite code, of which the old gentleman was so recently speaking. Accordingly, before we came within ten yards of each other, I pulled off my hat with an air of politeness seldom witnessed in northern latitudes. The old marquis recognized the signal, and doffed his beaver at the same moment. As we met, we came, of course to a full stop — both *uncovered*, as the code of politeness dictated. Fortunately, neither of us had an umbrella — and the total absence of any sort of protection against the elements, rendered our courtesy more conspicuous. In our salutations and greetings, we went deliberately through all the forms — shaking hands with the utmost politeness and cordiality, bowing right and left at the same time, with many very *sincere* assurances of pleasure at

the happy meeting. I made a point of honor to be particularly deliberate in my compliments and enquiries — Madame, the children, Kate and Cæsar, were all duly remembered. But no remark about the weather escaped either of us. The weather had nothing to do with the code, and we had nothing to do with the weather. People in the mean time were looking out of their shop windows at us, and watching our polite ceremonies with perfect astonishment. But there we stood, in the midst of the drifting snow, as unconcerned as if it had been a summer's morning, bowing and scraping, with our eyes and ears filled with the drift, and our hair frozen into wisps and whistling in the wind. But we paid no attention to such small matters, nor to the people in the shops, who, from the very politeness of our movements, began seriously to suspect that we were in reality cracked: for the Albanians, being mostly Dutch, had in truth but little better notions of politeness than the English themselves. After a while, however — after having exhausted the whole budget of compliments and talked over the news of the day; after having touched upon the prolific topic of Buonaparte and the Bourbons, and discussed the merits of French and English literature, Pope, Boileau, Fenelon, Massillon and Molière, we prepared to take leave; and having made our several

bows and congés, we thumped the snow out of our hats, and repeating the usual parting phrase, *au plaisir, monsieur*," without further ceremony, separated, and resumed our respective courses—I scudding before the gale under bare poles down the street, the old marquis, brailed and buttoned to the chin, beating slowly to windward up the hill!

Though the old gentleman, during the *tête à tête*, suffered no sign of impatience to escape him, yet I strongly suspect he must have wished the whole theory of civilization, the special code, and his polite pupil, to the devil, forty times over, before we parted!

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### THE MARQUIS'S PUPILS.

It was reasonably to have been expected, that before closing these reminiscences I should give some further account of the young gentlemen who, under the pretext of studying French, but in reality from motives of charity and the novelty of the thing, became pupils of the marquis, and boarders at the Hotel Du Barraille. It was my intention to give a full length portrait of each and every member of that celebrated school, but, upon reflection, it would occupy more time than I can now spare, and more space than my present canvass will admit. Besides,

the time has gone by, when such an exhibition would be interesting. Many of them have long since passed away, and few remain, to whom their features would be familiar. The light that shone in their chambers is extinguished — their halls are desolate — their dwellings are dark! I shall therefore content myself by collecting a few loose stones to set up in this place (after the manner of the patriarchs of old), as a memorial of their good-fellowship, and as a testimony to their whimsicalities forever! In other words, I shall furnish the reader with a brief compilation of their personal peculiarities, tastes, talents and acquirements: and if this should fail to perpetuate their memories, it will be the fault of the compiler, and not of the materials from which it is compiled.

Their names on the muster roll of the school were ranged in alphabetical order, and by a singular coincidence, their talents were found to correspond with their rank or position on the roll — descending the lettered ladder by regular gradation from A to K, inclusive. I shall speak of them in the same order, and as briefly as is compatible with the courtesy due to old acquaintance, or as may be consistent with a just enumeration of their various qualities.

Mr. A was a good English scholar, had a smat-

tering of Latin, was master of the French and familiar with all its dialects—patois, creole and Canadian. Wrote poetry, read German, and spoke Dutch. Was a good sailor, skilled in nautical lore and learned in its technicalities—understood the theory of gun boats as well as Mr. Jefferson himself, and could manage a canoe to perfection. He was a skillful angler, full of piscatory science, and familiar with all its tackling—poles and hooks and flies! He had a taste for drawing and painting—knew Shakespeare by heart—studied medicine, read the psalms, and played upon the fiddle. He was, moreover, a great sportsman and a capital shot—knew all about double barrel and single barrel, in cover or on the wing. Knew the habits of all sorts of game—wild goose, duck, plover, woodcock, snipe, hedge hog, fox and bear. Knew all the points of a horse, and spoke the classic language of the turf as fluently as his mother tongue. Was fond of dogs (as dogs were of him) but detested puppies. He was also a perfect master of fence—broad sword, small sword, quarter staff and cudgel. Knew something of mathematics, and something also of music—was a great mimic, a great quiz, and could tell a story better than any other man living. In addition to these few particulars, I may add, that he was a gentleman in every aspect—in

feeling, address and manner — that he always walked with a cane, and was always accompanied by *Sweet-heart*, *Blanche* and *Tray*.

Mr. B understood men and things in general, and politicians in particular, better than any other member of the club. He was something of a writer and something of a reader. He had a taste for satire, a great flow of animal spirits, some wit and a good memory. Was fond of poetry, music, fun, trigonometry and backgammon. Was a great talker, but talked well. A good listener, but impatient of folly. His strength lay in his good sense — his weakness in an undue fondness for poetry. He was a good judge of character, and knew every body's weak side but his own. He was in short a man of business with a literary taste — uneducated, but well read — quick in his perceptions, just in his conclusions, ready, apt, and of a lively imagination.

Mr. C was a hard student, well educated, well informed — had a full share of common sense, but no wit, no tact, no taste — was no lover of music or of poetry. Had no objection to *fun*, provided the unities of *time* and *place* were observed. His knowledge was respectable, sound, useful. He belonged to the school of utilitarians — out of that pale he never traveled but against his will. He was fond of argument and a good dinner of lob-



sters, logic, and law. He loved prudence, economy, new cider, green peas, and a beef steak garnished with onions. On the other hand, he had an unconquerable dislike to a tailor's bill, a beggar, and a cat! He was, however, a reliable man, punctual, regular, methodical, and as upright as a doric column.

Mr. D was perhaps the best educated, certainly the most accomplished of all the marquis's scholars. He had, moreover, the reputation of being the handsomest man in the city. He had a fine face, a fine tone of voice, an admirable form, agreeable manners, an easy lounging gait, and great good humor. He dressed well, danced well, was particularly fond of music, and though he could not distinguish one tune from another, was capital in a chorus. He was somewhat indolent, but good hearted, liberal, unaffected, and unpretending. He gave himself but little concern about the ordinary concerns of life, and with the *extraordinary* he had nothing to do.

He was fresh from college, and of course profoundly read and liberally learned. He knew the first three lines of Virgil by heart — knew something of Cornelius Nepos, and something of Cæsar. Had heard of Demosthenes, of Homer and Herodotus, perhaps of Xenophon and Xerxes, of Plato, and of Plutarch. But the ancients did not, I be-

leive, occupy all his thoughts — he loved the younger and the gayer world. He loved wit, he loved music, and what is more to the purpose, he loved *fun* in all its endless varieties, forms and phases: And to this last article he contributed his full share; he added largely to its capital stock, and still more liberally to its circulation.

Mr. E was one of those polite and quiet men who win their way by gentleness, rather than by force. What others claimed as a matter of right, he received as a special favor. Though uninitiated in party politics, and indifferent to the rule by which the right is determined, he nevertheless went with the majority. He was always with the many, never with the few. He admired power, strength, wealth, dress, fashion, taste and show. He paid the profoundest deference and respect to men in high stations, and wisely measured their talents by their rank. His knowledge was rather exact than extensive, but his good nature, politeness and courtesy, knew no bounds. His colloquial powers were not great, but he was an excellent listener, and laughed at every joke, whether he understood it or not. He took no part in any sharp discussion, trod upon no man's toes, and differed with no man in opinion, at least not audibly. He sung a good song, took lessons in dancing, wore kid gloves, and played upon

the flute. With such a happy temper of mind, and such amiable qualities, it would be needless to say that he was a universal favorite.

Though there was much in the character of Mr. E to which a proud mind would object, yet I must confess that I looked upon it with some degree of admiration, and occasionally with a feeling bordering upon envy. He was certainly the most amiable, and by far the most popular man in the club.

Mr. F made no pretensions to scholarship of any kind. He knew nothing of Greek, Latin, French or German. He had read but little beyond the Pentateuch, day book and ledger. But he had good sense, good nature, and mother wit in abundance. It may easily be imagined that he had no taste for poetry and no skill in music. Yet, like Mr. D, his voice was admirable in a chorus. He borrowed nothing from others, nothing from books. His powers and resources were all his own. He uttered nothing that smelt of the lamp — though it sometimes had the flavor of the shop. Ease, humor, drollery, a love of wit and a love of *fun*, characterized his social intercourse. He was perpetually saying good things, and sometimes, I used to think, without knowing it. He was, in short, not only witty himself, but the cause of wit in others. A better hearted man never lived.

Mr. G was, in one sense, *the lion of the club*. He was, indeed, one of a thousand! in other words, a most singular character, a most perfect original. He possessed one quality, one single trait, composed partly of mind and partly of manner, which, like Aaron's rod, swallowed up all the rest. It was *assurance*—or, more correctly speaking, *impudence*! which, but for its unbounded excess, would have been offensive, if not intolerable. It was neither. It was indeed so striking, so transcendental, as seemingly to partake of the character of genius. It seemed, in him, to lose the vulgarity of its nature and to operate like wit. Its exhibition was indeed almost always followed by a roar of laughter.

The voice, the eye, the whole face, indeed the *whole man*, was the expressive type of cold, impassive, unabashed and unabashable impudence. Yet it had weight, it had character, it had influence. It was surprising, astonishing, amusing. Notwithstanding the absurdity of the assertion, proposition or speech, in which this peculiar trait was embodied, it was so strengthened and sustained by the air of confidence with which it was uttered, that you were led to doubt for a moment the correctness of your own conclusions, thinking it possible there might be in it something more than appeared upon the face of the record.

He was not, however, altogether destitute of other and more agreeable qualities, but they were lost in the blaze of the virtue we have attempted to describe. He was rather good natured than otherwise, full of crochets and inventions provocative of mirth, and to one who sought amusement only, was an agreeable companion.

He had received a college education, and could  
—— write his name !

Mr. H was a gentleman in every respect, but without any strong points of character, peculiarities, faults or follies. He played an excellent game of whist, talked to his horse, read Ossian and the Canticles, loved music, and entered cordially into all the amusements of the club.

Mr. I was placed by ballot at the head of the table as carver and master of ceremonies, which station (particularly when there was no company present and the principal dish was a cutlet of liver or a bowl of soup) he filled with distinguished ability.

Mr. K, the last name upon the muster roll of the school — the least and the humblest, I shall leave to the imagination of the reader. It does not become me to draw my own portrait.

Now, it would be doing great injustice to the marquis's pupils, to dismiss them with such a bare

and skeleton-like enumeration of their tastes and qualities, as is presented in the foregoing sketches. From such loose outlines and unconnected details their real characters cannot justly be inferred. The union of such elements might or might not have been favorable. The moral aspect, the combined influence, the general result is still wanting. That result, in my judgment, was highly creditable.

That there was much social freedom, wild wit, humor, song, and youthful jollity among them, I readily admit: but there was a counterpoise to this — there was something higher and better. There was a high sense of honor, a pride of character — ambition, emulation, and effort. There was much close and varied reading, much laborious study. More than one language was cultivated, more than one species of knowledge acquired. Composition was practiced, and poetry studied as an art — the latter was indeed assiduously cultivated as a vehicle of satire and of wit. A sufficient knowledge of French was obtained, by those who pursued the study, to read and translate it with ease. To *speak* it was found to be a very different thing — the time was too short, the opportunities too few — it was, in fact, commenced too late in the day. But the door to French literature was opened, and to be able to read Molière in the original, even if no-

thing else had been gained, was worth all the time we spent at the school.

In all these various studies and pursuits, as well as in all the amusements of the club, good manners, good habits, and a gentlemanly tone of feeling were observed. Temperance, notwithstanding the goblets that occasionally figured in our songs, was the order of the day—the voluntary, unpledged habit of each and of all. We should as soon have thought of sharpening our wits by profanity as of drawing our inspiration from the glass.

ERRATUM.

Page 19, note, for Min/housen, read Minc/housen.



# INDEX.

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- Adams, John Quincy, 88.  
 Albany, in 1800, 20, 23; population at different periods, 20, in 1695, 22; beef (sturgeon), 24; inveterately Dutch, 27; chamber of commerce, 49; trade with the far west, 50; churches in 1796, 74; in 1803, 80; Gazette, 72; Register, 71, 72.  
 Alexander, Joseph, 49.  
 Ames, Ezra, 41.  
 Anglo-American type, 112.  
 Annals of Albany, 71.  
 Apothecary's Hall, 120.  
 Arbor Hill, 44.  
 Armstrong, John, 86.  
 Arnold, Gen., 45.  
 Ash-Grove church, 53.  
 Assemblies, city, 34, 35, 36, 38.  
 Bank of Albany, 66, 83; president of, 43, 44, 56.  
 Banyar, Goldsborough, 112, 118.  
 Barber, John, 73; Robert, 71, 73.  
 Barnard, Daniel D., 43.  
 Bassett street, 122.  
 Battle in State street, 78.  
 Bell of the old church, 120.  
 Benedict, Lewis, 49.  
 Bleeckers, 45; Harmanus, 99; Jan Jansen, 99.  
 Bloodgood, Francis, 78, 79.  
 Boileau, 128.  
 Bourbons, 128.  
 Boyd, John I., 48; Peter, 48.  
 Bradford, John Melancthon, 75.  
 Brass knocker, 24.  
 Broad street opened, 53.  
 Broome, Lieut. Gov., 69.  
 Buckingham, traveler, 43.  
 Buonaparte, 128; Jerome, 86.  
 Burgoyne, Gen., 59, 60.  
 Burnet, Gov., 57.  
 Burr, Aaron, 86.  
 Cæsar, 128.  
 Caldwell, James, 91; town of, 97; William, 97.  
 Camp-ground, 122.  
 Canada invaded, 45.  
 Canal bank, 50.  
 Caps, red worsted, 25.  
 Chamber of commerce, 49.  
 Champlin, John, 79.  
 Chandler, Col. John, 81.  
 Chicago, trade with, 50.  
 Churches, first in Albany, 74.  
 Cincinnati, Recollections of, vi.  
 Clarke, Walter, 49, 96.  
 Clinton, Col. Charles, 69; De Witt, 64, 69, 86; George, 57, 69.  
 Clowes, Rev. Timothy, 118.  
 Cohoes, 20.  
 Congregational church, 74.  
 Congress Hall, 82.  
 Conspiracy of the nobles, 36, 37.  
 Cooper, Dr. Charles D., 78, 79; Mrs., 78.  
 Corning, Erastus, 48, 49.  
 Cornwallis, 81.  
 Delavan, Edward C., 47; Henry W., 47; House, 45.  
 Delfthaven pilgrims, 30.  
 Dell, Rev. Godfrey, 122.  
 Detroit river, 26; trade with, 50.

- DeWitt, Simeon, 41, 79.  
Dickinson, Benjamin, 47.  
Douglass, Alfred, 50.  
Douws, 45.  
DuBarraille, Marquis, 101.  
Dummer, George, 49, 50, 51.  
Dutch Church, Middle, 39;  
    North, 25; old, 28, 30, 39,  
    40; funerals, 121.  
Dutchmen, smoking, 26.  
Eagle Tavern, 82.  
Eclipse of 1806, 41.  
Elm tree, 25.  
English travelers, traits of, 19.  
Episcopal church built, 39.  
Erie Lake, 26.  
Etsbergers, 24.  
Fearon traveler, 19.  
Fenelon, 128.  
First Presbyterian church, 48.  
Foote, Ebenezer, 79.  
Fort Edward, 58.  
Fort Orange, 28.  
Fort Stanwix, view of, 45, 58.  
Fort Winnebago, trade with, 50.  
Fox creek, 104.  
Franklin and Van Schee, 122.  
Freedoms of the city, 32; form  
    of, 33.  
Frelinghuysen, now Franklin  
    street, 122.  
French politeness, 126.  
Front doors, 24.  
Fur traders, 26.  
Gansevoort, Gen. Peter, 45.  
Garrot, Monsieur, 87.  
Gates, Gen., 59.  
Genet, Edmond Charles, 70.  
Giles, Mr., 93.  
Gold, Thomas R., 79.  
Gould, Job, 47; Thomas, 47, 48.  
Green Bay, trade with, 50.  
Gregory & Co., 50.  
Gregory, Ezra, 80, 87; House,  
    81; Lieut., 82; Dea. Mat-  
    thew, 80, 81, 84; Moses, 81;  
    Matthew, vi, 93, 94, 95.  
Gutters introduced, 31.  
Hale, Daniel, 46.  
Hall, traveler, 19.  
Hamilton, Alexander, 64, 86.  
Hats, cocked, 25.  
Henry, John V., 70.  
Hochstrasser, Jacob, 45; Paul,  
    45.  
Hodges dock, 23.  
Holbein, Hans, 123.  
Hotel Du Barraille, 129.  
Howe, Lord, 57.  
Hudson, Recollections of, v.  
Huguenots of France, 55; pro-  
    tected, 30.  
Huron Lake, 26.  
Hutton, Isaac, 49; George, 49.  
Improvements began, 39.  
Irving, Washington, 35.  
Jamestown, 21.  
James, William, 46.  
Jay, Gov., 62.  
Jefferson's election, 17, 18, 74.  
Jefferson, Thomas, 17; called  
    the Great Apostle, 18; his  
    election an epoch, 18; com-  
    pared with John Tyler, 96.  
Jenkins, Col. Elisha, 70, 78,  
    79, 123, 124.  
Jersey City Glass Works, 50.  
Jimmy Kane's walk, 53.  
Johnson, Dr., 87; street, 122;  
    Sir John, 58.  
Jones, Ignatius, vii, 93.  
Kane, James, 46, 51, 52, 53,  
    54, 55, 79, 96.  
Kate, 128.  
Kent, James, 66, 69.  
Knickerbackers, orthography  
    and derivation of the name,  
    35.  
Knickerbocker history, 35, 44.  
Knower, Benjamin, 51.  
La Fayette, Gen., 82; head-  
    quarters, 24.  
Lake George, 97; expedition  
    down, 57.  
Lambert, John, 84.  
Lansingburgh, 84.  
Lansings, 45, 56.  
Lansing, Abraham G., 64, 70;  
    Chancellor, 61, 63, 69; John  
    Jr., 33, 63, 69.  
Levies, Schuyler captain of,  
    57.

- Lewis, Morgan, 86; Robert, 115; Stewart, 115; Tavern, 115.  
 Liquors excluded at Tontine, 82, 85.  
 Livingston, Chancellor, 86.  
 Lydius, Balthazar, 119; Rev. John, 120, 121, 122; street, 122.  
 Lyme, 47, 48.  
 Mackinac, 26.  
 McNaughton, Dr. Peter, 47.  
 Madison, M., 82.  
 Maiden Lane, 23.  
 Marcy, William L., 47.  
 Marryat, traveler, 19.  
 Marvin, Alexander, 47; John, 47; Richard, 47; Uriah, 47; William, 47.  
 Mason, Dr., 86.  
 Massilon, 128.  
 Mather, Thomas, 48.  
 Mayflower, 30.  
 Mechanics and Farmers' Bank, v, 52, 73.  
 Mentz, Sebastiana Cornelia, 99.  
 Merchants, principal, 45, 46.  
 Michigan, trade with, 50.  
 Middletown, Ct., 48.  
*Minkhousen*, 19, read *Minchhousen*.  
 Mohawk river, 26.  
 Moliere, 128.  
 Montgomery, Gen., 45; succeeds Schuyler, 57.  
 Munchausen, Baron, 19.  
 Munchoff, chaplain, 19.  
 Newman, Henry, 49.  
 New Netherland, 44.  
 New York, first governor, 99.  
 New York State Bank, v, 48, 66, 69.  
 North Dutch Church, 23.  
 North-market street, northern limit of, 44.  
 North Pearl street, 24, 25.  
 Norton, John T., 49.  
 Nott, Dr. Eliphalet, vi, 74, 75, 76.  
 Nucella street, 122.  
 Olcott, Thomas W., v, 43, 44.  
 Old people, 119.  
 Oneida lake, 26.  
 Ontario lake, 26.  
 Orphan Asylum, 82.  
 Oswego, 26.  
 Patroons, 116.  
 Pemberton's corner, 29.  
 Peter, 114, 115, 116, 117, 124, 125.  
 Platt, Ananias, 84.  
 Politeness, French, 126.  
 Pontiac, trade with, 80.  
 Pope, 158.  
 Potter, Bishop Alonzo, 53.  
 Presbyterian church, 74.  
 Protestants of the Netherlands, 55.  
 Pruyns, 45.  
 Puffendorf, 26.  
 Pulpit, ancient, 30.  
 Puritans of New England, 55.  
 Quay street, 23.  
 Raymond, B. C., 48.  
 Reckhows, 24.  
 Robison, John, 92.  
 Rochefaucault-Liancourt, 74.  
 Rochelle, 30.  
 Roger's Biographical Dictionary, 45.  
 Romaine, Rev., 75.  
 Saginaw bay, 26.  
 St. Clair, Gen., 90; river, 26.  
 St. Leger, 45.  
 Sanders & Ogden, 49.  
 Sault St. Marie, trade with, 50.  
 Schaets, Rev. Gideon, 119.  
 Schuylers, 56.  
 Schuyler, Catharina, 61; Col. Peter, 56; Col. Philip, 57; Gen. Philip, 56, 61, 64, 58, 59; Mrs., 60.  
 Sedgwick, Theodore, 98.  
 Senegambia, 99.  
 Skeensborough creek, 58.  
 Southwick, Solomon, 71, 72.  
 Spencer Ambrose, 69; John, 48, 49.  
 Specht's regiment, 19.  
 Sponts abolished, 31, 32, 33.  
 Staatses, 45.

- Staats Honse, 27.  
 Stages, early, 84.  
 Stafford, John, 49; Spencer, 48, 49.  
 Stanton, George W., 47.  
 State dock, 23.  
 State street, state of, 33; paved, 34; battle in, 78.  
 Stevensen, John, 56; House, 56.  
 Stewart, Gilbert, 47.  
 Street's Council of Revision, 64, 69.  
 Streets named from the domin-  
 es, 122.  
 Stringer, Dr., 24.  
 Sturgeon, eagerness for, 24;  
 ship, 24.  
 Stuyvesant Landing, 49.  
 Tammany Hall, 12.  
 Taverns, 80.  
 Taylor, John, 69, 78, 79.  
 Ten Broecks, 65.  
 Ten Broeck, Abraham, 43, 44;  
 Dirk, 44.  
 Ten Eycks, 45.  
 Ticonderoga, fortress of, 58  
 Tillotson, Thomas, 70.  
 Tompkins, Daniel D., 69, 86.  
 Tontine Coffee House, 54, 80,  
 84.  
 Townsend, Isaiah, 46, 49.  
 Trotter's alley, 48.  
 Troy stage, 84.  
 Troy, Reminiscences of, 70, 120.  
 Tucker & Crawford, 48.  
 Two steepled Church (see  
 Dutch Church).  
 Tyler, John, 96.  
 Uncle Sam's figures, 21.  
 Van Benthuyzen, C., v.  
 Van Buren, Martin, 56.  
 Vanderheyden mansion, 120.  
 Van Loons, 45.  
 Van Loon, Peter, 49.  
 Van Rensselaer, Elizabeth, 44;  
 Gen., 79; Jeremiah, 43;  
 Solomon, 78, 79; Stephen,  
 43, 44.  
 Van Schaicks, 45.  
 Van Schaick, Col., 42; John,  
 79.  
 Van Schelluyne, Cornelius, 44;  
 Dirk, 44.  
 Van Twiller, Sir Wouter, 26.  
 Van Vechtens, 56.  
 Van Vechten, Abraham, 61, 62,  
 70, 79.  
 Vossenkil, 104.  
 Walsh, Dudley, 46.  
 Watering place, 23.  
 Watson, Elkanah, 33; elected  
 constable, 32, 34.  
 Webb & Dummer, 49.  
 Webb, Henry L., 50; H. L. and  
 C. B., 50; John H., 48; J. H.  
 and H. L., 49.  
 Webster's corner, 25.  
 Wendell, Anna, 61; Dr. Peter,  
 82; Gen. John H., 42.  
 Westerlo, Rev. E., 24; street,  
 122; street extended, 53.  
 Willard, Dr. S. D., vi.  
 Williams, Elisha, 79.  
 Willows on the dock, 24.  
 Wilson, John Q., vi.  
 Windows, stained, 30.  
 Wing, Dr. Joel A., 84; Mat-  
 thew Gregory, 83.  
 Wood creek, 58.  
 Woodworth, John, 70, 79.  
 Wooster, Gen., 58.  
 Worth, Gorham A., v.  
 Wyckoff, Isaac N., 49.  
 Wynantskil, 48.  
 Yankies in possession, 33.  
 Yateses, 56.  
 Yates, chief justice, 64; John  
 Van Ness, 65; John W., 66;  
 Robert, 64, 65.







